UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF VOCATION

BY

PATRICIA ANNE KATHERINE ALBERS

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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Pat Albers

14 Westview Place
St. Albert, AB. Canada T8N 3J8

Date: Sept. 29, 2000

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *The Lived Experience of Vocation* submitted by Patricia Anne Katherine Albers in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education. Specialization in Adult and Higher Education.

Sue M. Scott

S. Scott, Supervisor

D Mappin

D. Mappin

D. Truscott

Date: September 25, 2000

# Abstract

Pursued in this study is the question: *what is the lived experience of vocation?* A phenomenological approach is taken toward uncovering some essential aspects of vocation. Research activities include a multi-disciplinary literature review, data-gathering interviews, and an autobiographical reflection. Presuppositions are explicated.

Data analysis reveals eighteen second order themes, used to describe the overall experience of each co-researcher. Fifteen shared themes are clustered into five third-order themes, including congruence; vocation as life theme; vocation as intimate relationship; the reflected self; and other-directedness, which organize the overall synthesis of the shared structure of the experience of vocation, and the final discussion. Implications for further research and vocational counselling are discussed.

Socrates referred to himself as "midwife", one who brings forth that which is within. In considering vocational development, the question is asked: *How may we attend these births in a helpful way to bring forth that which resides within?*

To my girls, **Rebecca** and **Sarah** Jackson
May you be who you are
while becoming, each day, more who you are.

To my Mom, Hilda Albers
For who you are to me.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

> Always you have been told that work is a curse and labour a misfortune.
> But I say to you that when you work you fulfill a part of earth's furthest
> dream, assigned to you when that dream was born,
> And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life,
> And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inmost
> secret...
> Work is love made visible (Kahil Gibran, 1984, pp. 27-28)

## The Birth of the Question

*What is the experience of being called to a particular vocation?* This is the question that has guided my research throughout this paper. It is a peculiar quest, a return to a particular phenomenon that has traditionally been linked to religious causes. Initially, when I thought of callings, my mind conjured images of extraordinary, exceptional, and rare individuals, icons like Joan of Arc, Florence Nightingale, Moses, and Mother Theresa. I envisioned a calling as a majestic voice filtering down with heavenly light from between parted clouds to illuminate with purpose, inspire with passion, and guide in wisdom a select and chosen few. As such, how was I then to assimilate what Harrison (1996) calls an anachronism, a religious word ill at ease in these times, an incongruity in the secular world? Cochran (1990) agrees: "to speak aloud of a true vocation might be an embarrassment at the present time" (p. 10).

On the first evening of my Qualitative Research course, Educational Psychology 503, I arrived late and consequently had to sit in the last chair at the far end of the packed room. As fellow students, most of whom were twenty years my junior and in the doctorate level psychology program, introduced themselves and their brilliant dissertation ideas, I was at a loss. I felt suddenly inferiour and inadequate to the task. Yet, when it was my turn, words flowed easily about the concept of vocation; I surprised myself because I had never actually verbalized this interest before. Presumably, this topic had been residing within all along but I had never before considered it a viable topic of research. And yet, there it was. I had said it and, once voiced, I could not recall it; nor did I want to for suddenly I was inspired, impassioned and enthusiastic.

Later, upon further reflection, I realized that this interest in callings had not, of course, come out of thin air. Rather, I had been secretly nurturing the question for some time. Gadamer (1990) describes how a question "presses itself on us" (p. 366), how it presents itself more than we do, how it occurs to us in an emergent way. And so it has been for me--an exciting and interesting process that has developed, evolved, and provoked.

When asking, *what is the experience of vocation*?, I hoped to discover the meaning of a complex, ancient, and often misinterpreted concept. Here was a question I could put my own heart and soul into, a question that stirred me on numerous levels--personal, social, professional, spiritual, and political. What is the meaning of calling? What is the lived experience of vocation? What are the common threads that interweave and connect the experiences of those with vocation? More important, *what and how does the concept and experience of vocation contribute to the field of career development and vocational counselling practice?*

Thus, after months of struggling to find a suitable research topic, it had suddenly appeared and I felt compelled to pursue it. I experienced a strong sense of "knowing" that this was "it" for me. The topic seemed timely and pertinent, not just in personal, social, and professional realms, but also within the broader sphere of society as a whole. I sensed that something was lacking on all levels and hoped that a deeper understanding of calling would help me become a more effective practitioner and assist others in developing more meaning and passion in their lives.

## Background to the Concept of Vocation and the Rationale for Research

Following the formulation of the research question, I began the process of interviewing people with a calling. Although I was already well grounded in career development theory and career counselling practice, I had then only my own personal perspectives on the notion of calling and its place within the broader realm of my work as a career practitioner. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), an exhaustive literature review can actually inhibit the purpose of discovery inherent in qualitative research by inundating the researcher with many preconceived categories. Thus, I deliberately did a literature review after, instead of prior to my interviews and found this sequence appropriate. And, I experienced great satisfaction when I later reviewed the literature and discovered much of my interviewees' experience reflected there.

As I began my literature review, I realized I was aiming at a moving target. Trying to gain an understanding of vocation was more difficult and much less straight forward than I had imagined it would be. Essentially, I was seeking to understand an originally religious concept that had evolved historically to include secular, economic, spiritual, and political meanings. It was a task that proved exciting, challenging, and more than a little daunting. Vocation was a topic that seemed to belong nowhere and yet emerged everywhere, erupting forth from numerous and eclectic sources, from career development, religion, and psychology, to adult education foundational literature, medicine, philosophy, and "new age" literature.

## Research question and purpose

To reiterate, my research question is: *what is the lived experience of vocation?* The purpose of my study is to achieve four goals:

(1) to understand the subjective experience of calling in terms of common themes or patterns that emerge among the "ordinary" co-researchers;

(2) to frame this understanding within a multi-disciplinary framework;

(3) to explore the research on vocation and compare it to the lived experience, thereby providing a vital connection between research and practice; and

(4) to discuss the implications of the findings for research and counselling practice with individuals struggling with life direction issues.

## Overview of the Research Method and its Purpose

Because I hoped to capture the deep meaning of the lived experience of "ordinary" individuals who experienced a calling, and since phenomenological research focuses on Patton's (1990) question: "What is the structure and essence of experience for these people?" (p. 69), the choice of method seemed natural. As well, phenomenology seems an obvious choice for the research of counselling issues because counselling practice and existential-phenomenological thought are closely linked (Osborne, 1990). As a career counsellor, this link reinforced my choice of method.

The major implications for this study are for general public education, my own personal and professional enlightenment, the career development field, and vocational counselling practice. The explication of the "deep structure" meanings of calling within this study will serve as a guide to practitioners who work with adults undergoing major life changes and the quest for meaning. Hopefully, a better understanding of vocation will guide counsellors in their perspectives, with a shift from goal-setting to *soul-whetting*.

In practical terms, I grounded the research in the lived experiences of three "called" individuals by conducting interviews that became my primary source of data. I subsequently studied the data to discover themes particular to each experience and then formulated themes common to all three participants. In qualitative research, data are not gathered to prove a preconceived hypothesis; rather, abstract concepts or themes emerge from the data in an inductive way (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

### Rationale for research

That calling was a topic worthy of thoughtful consideration and further study became increasingly obvious as I reviewed the literature, reflected on my own experiences, and talked to others. The following eight reasons justify my rationale for pursuing this study.

First, career development literature seldom incorporates the notion of vocation, being more concerned with the terms job, occupation, and career. The modern concept of vocation has increasingly come to mean the trades, as in vocational training, and thus a poor second cousin to the notion of career. Conversely, the literature that focuses on vocation does not generally address the notion of career. How is it that what seems should be the foundation of all career development theories, i.e. the notion of vocation, has been largely divorced from the process of finding one's way in the world? What would a better understanding of vocation mean in today's world? Would it have a viable function?

Second, the topic of vocation is widely addressed in many disciplines, from medicine and religion to sociology and economics. Its influence is seemingly ubiquitous.

Third, whenever I mentioned my research topic to anyone, I invariably received an interested and positive response. Never was anyone neutral or apathetic; nor did they need any prompting to engage in discussion. I discovered that people wanted to talk about, reflect on and explore the topic in terms of their own lives. It was a subject that seemed to touch everyone, that invoked a self-reflective and meaning-oriented stance. Perhaps, I hoped, this universal appeal meant that I was tapping into something very basic yet intrinsically essential to human nature.

Fourth, there has been a recent renewal of interest in the topic of vocation, as revealed within my literature review. There appears to be a growing attempt to re-examine, redefine, and revive the link between work and personal meaning, between self and others, and between vocation and soul. "The plain fact is that our habitual way of working does not work" (Jarow, 1995, p. 9).

Fifth, there is considerable literature on callings within a religious context but a veritable paucity of research on the experience of callings within a secular context. Except for Bogart's (1994) own description of his experience of calling, I was unable to find much research on the lived experience of "ordinary" people and their vocations. Cochran (1990) and Hillman (1996) explored the notion of vocation by studying the lives of well-known individuals who clearly have or had (many are deceased) a vocation. Although admirable and helpful, their works are based primarily on history, biographies, and autobiographies, and thus lack the immediacy and intimacy of qualitative research. Edwards and Edwards (1996) use anecdotes about their clients to illustrate their themes. However, these are incomplete captions rather than in-depth interviews.

Whereas Cochran and Hillman have explored the lives of extraordinary people, I have chosen to explore the lived experience of vocation by so-called "ordinary" people. Even more specifically, I have chosen to research the lived experience of secular vocation. Would the experience of ordinary people be consistent with patterns or themes reflected in the experience of famous or "exceptional" individuals?

Sixth, if Leider and Shapiro (in Jones, 1996) are correct in their belief that the number one fear of people is "having lived a meaningless life" (p. x) then the concept of vocation, inherently linked to life purpose and meaning, would seem an apt antidote to this fear.

Seventh, there appears to be a growing angst, a fearful and pervasive anxiety in the labour market that doesn't seem to be addressed by traditional career development theories. Theologian Matthew Fox (1994) described the "undergoing of soul seizures as the infinite array of consumer goods and addictive salary bonuses fails to speak to the deeper needs of the soul" (p. 14). Some career development theorists (Osipow, 1990; Savickas & Lent, 1994) recognize the inability of current career development theory to provide adequate assistance and direction to clients and counsellors within today's rapidly changing and uncertain world, and are consequently seeking greater congruence among current theories. Others (Gelatt, 1991; Hansen, 1986; Miller-Tiedeman, 1989) are now modifying their theories to incorporate ideas typically associated with vocation. Unfortunately, they are typically doing so under the guise of career.

Eighth, most career development research has been normative in perspective, using large numbers of people and pre-established variables. The notion of vocation cannot readily be captured in traditional research methods (Cochran, 1990).

Limitations of the study

I was, at times, overwhelmed by the amount of information related to the concept of vocation. Although very little of it was contained within the career development literature, vocation proved a topic of considerable interest in many disciplines. Consequently, I had to decide which fields to include and which to exclude. Obviously, this limited the study and lent a certain perspective unique to my selection of disciplines.

While the notion of calling is traditionally associated with religion, I limited the study by deliberately excluding most of the literature pertaining to religious callings. I did, however, select some authors with a decidedly Christian perspective (Jones, 1996; Hardy, 1990; Fox, 1994) because they, particularly, had much to offer my study of secular callings. Nonetheless, even within these self-imposed constrictions, conducting a multi-disciplinary literature review proved a daunting task.

In reviewing the data I had collected, I was again overwhelmed by the sheer volume. I realized that I had more than enough information to write a substantial book or two. However, because my purpose here is to write a thesis and not a book, the resulting description of the experience of vocation is not intended to be all-encompassing. It represents instead my attempt to extract from the data some of the key themes of vocation. I hope to contribute to the existing bodies of literature by exploring "ordinary" people's experience of calling.

## Thesis Structure

The organization of the research study is described as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction. An introduction to the question and its pertinence provided the focus of this chapter. In addition, I presented my rationale for pursuing the question, provided a brief overview of the research method, and discussed the limitations of the study.

Chapter 2: Multi-disciplinary Review of the Literature. The concept of vocation has a strong historical background and embodies both traditional and modern meanings. Because it is rooted in various disciplines, I have applied a multi-disciplinary approach in an attempt to provide an appropriately broad context in which to explore the notion of calling.

Chapter 3: Method and Procedures. The method used in this study is a phenomenological method that relies heavily on Colaizzi's (1978) suggested procedural steps but with some adaptations. I provided a clear audit trail by describing the procedures used to carry out the research, including bracketing, data collection, data analysis and data interpretation. In addition to bracketing any presuppositions which may have affected my interpretation of the data, I included an autobiographical reflection which explores my past and current involvement with the topic and informs the reader how I arrived at this study. Finally, I presented criteria by which the reader may evaluate any validity and reliability issues.

Chapter 4: The Interviews. I presented, in Appendices A, B, and C, the data extracted from my interviews with three "called" individuals. Appendix A contains two tables which present, in tabular from, the first and second order themes for Samantha. Appendix B contains first and second order data analysis for Pam, and Appendix C does the same for Rochester. By extracting first and second themes, I was able to organize, by second order themes, an overall synthesis of each individual's experience of vocation.

I clustered the second order themes into five third order themes, which are congruence, vocation as life theme, vocation as intimate relationship, the reflected self, and other-directedness. I used the five third order themes to organize and present an overall synthesis of the shared experience of calling, one that reveals only structural components without referring to the specific content of the co-researchers' experiences.

Chapter 5: Research Discussion: Vocation Lives! In this chapter, I discussed the research findings in terms of the literature examined in Chapter 2. I used the five third order themes presented in Chapter 4 as a framework for organizing the discussion of the findings. As well, the implications of the research results for further research and for vocational counseling practice are discussed.

# Chapter 2: Multi-disciplinary Review of the Literature

## Introduction

The notion of vocation is a concept common to Eastern, Western, traditional and contemporary religions; however, not all callings are religious. Secular callings may contain some or all of the elements of religious callings and both may facilitate a deeper understanding of essential elements of human existence. My focus here is primarily secular but goes beyond modern concepts of vocation, which are largely associated with the trades and vocational training, to include the elements of spirituality, other-directedness, and self-transcendence, principles traditionally associated with religious callings.

My literature search revealed a plethora of material on religious callings, which I have largely excluded, but I have deliberately chosen primarily, but not exclusively, secular sources. Although my intention was to develop a broader framework of theory and practice, I soon discovered that the literature on the topic was rather too broad for my purposes and needed to be organized in a way that kept it manageable and practical. Subsequently, I have divided my review of the literature into four parts.

First, I will review what I shall call "vocational" literature, an eclectic, self-selected, and loose collection of sources pertaining to vocation. Second, I will review career development theories, all of which were developed in the twentieth century. Third, the field of psychology provides many interesting insights into vocation. Fourth and finally, I will explore adult educational foundational literature to expose a strong legacy of calling. I have deliberately chosen a multi-disciplinary approach because it provides a framework for comparisons among the various approaches.

I initially expected to find considerable overlap between the so called "vocational" literature and the career development literature. However, I discovered that career development theory seldom incorporates the concept of calling or vocation and that even its use of the term is within a contemporary context and therefore has a different meaning, that is, vocation as trade, charity, or low-status work (Rehm, 1990).

Frank Parsons (1909), whose pivotal work, Choosing a Vocation, laid the foundation for the field of "vocational" guidance in the last century, wrote virtually nothing about vocation in its traditional sense as summons or calling. Rather, he conceived vocational guidance as "the wise selection of [one's] business, profession, trade, or occupation..." (p.3). Thus, he was using vocation in a modern sense, whose aim "is not to cultivate a vocation, but to create a satisfying match between person and occupation. Vocation...is peripheral and scarcely noted" (Cochran, 1990, p. 10).

## Definitions

I shall use Webster's (1986) definitions of calling and vocation as the standard by which other definitions will be compared. Webster's (1986) defines vocation as (1) a summons, bidding, invitation; (2) a summons from God to an individual or group to undertake the obligations and perform the duties of a particular task or function in life: a divine call to a place of service to others; (3) one's obligations and responsibilities (as to others) under God; involves the total orientation of a man's life and work in terms of his ultimate sense of mission; and (4) the special function of an individual or group within a larger order (as society).

Vocation is derived from the Latin verb, vocare, meaning "to call" and, as such, is directly linked to the term calling. Calling is defined by Webster as (1) a strong inner impulse toward a particular course of action or duty...such as an impulse accompanied by conviction of divine influence; (2) station or position in life; and (3) the activity in which one customarily engages as a vocation or profession.

Each of the four major categories of the literature define vocation in various ways, not all of which are compatible with Webster's definition. The concepts of job, occupation, career, calling, and vocation, will be explored within the contexts of particular theories. Although I use the terms calling and vocation interchangeably throughout my research, theorists frequently used other terms, including right livelihood, true work, purpose, mission, destiny, bliss, path, dharma, and passion.

## Paradigm Perspectives

Prior to examining the literature, it is important to consider several different paradigms that undergird much of social science research and literature. Because my approach is multi-disciplinary, the following discussion will help put into perspective the approach that is taken by each of the four categories of literature review. Neuman (2000) states:

> …social researchers choose from alternative approaches to science. Each approach has its own set of philosophical assumptions and its own stance on how to do research. The approaches are rarely declared explicitly in research reports…(p. 84)

Neuman presents, in an excellent table (p. 85), a summary of differences among three approaches to research: positivism, interpretive social science, and critical social science. The same topic may be studied from different perspectives but each approach has its own distinctive set of assumptions. Using Neuman's table as a guide, I shall present, in abbreviated form, some of the key features of each research approach.

*Positivism* contends that (1) its purpose is to reveal natural laws from which predictions can be made and events controlled; (2) one can discover order in preexisting patterns and findings are repeatable; (3) humans are rational, self-interested, and shaped by outside factors; (4) common sense is less valid than science; (5) its theory is logical and deductive and explanations are based on facts; and (6) science is void of values (Neuman, 2000, p. 85). Much of the traditional career development theory, with its rationalistic focus, aligns with the positivistic paradigm and is discussed in considerable detail in this chapter.

*Interpretive social science* carries the following assumptions: (1) its purpose is to understand and describe social action; (2) social reality is fluid; (3) humans are meaning-makers; (4) common sense is incorporated into useful theories; (5) its theory describes how meaning systems are developed; (6) research results feel right to those being studied; (7) supporting theoretical evidence is found in social interactions; and (8) values are neither right nor wrong. Much of the "vocational" literature and some of the psychology literature aligns closely with this paradigm.

The third of Neuman's approaches is *critical social science*. It adheres to the following tenets: (1) its purpose is to create radical societal change; (2) social reality is conflict-ridden and controlled by hidden structures; (3) humans are creative and have the potential to overcome exploitation; (4) common sense is based on false meaning systems, such as myths; (5) its theory aims to demystify illusory myths and provide a vision for change; (6) its goal is to provide the necessary tools for social change; (7) evidence is contrary to presumed facts; and (8) it defends a position based on its stance that there is a right and a wrong. Much of the adult education foundational literature, in stressing the need for critical reflection, social action, and deliberative democracy, falls into this paradigm.

Hopefully, the above paradigm perspectives will assist the reader in discerning the philosophical approaches, principles, and stances taken by each category of the literature review. This classification system is by no means definitive and may well overlap across more than one of the categories. First, then, I explore the nature of vocation as described within the "vocational" literature.

## Vocational Literature

### Introduction and Historical Perspectives

For most of us, work consumes more time than any other activity and lends focus and structure to our days; it is a major organizing principle in our lives. What we do is strongly linked to how we think about ourselves. One can hate one's work or love it; it can be viewed as drudgery or delight. The meaning we attach to work is dependent upon how we view it. Perhaps it is "just a job" or it may be an all-encompassing passion that is core to who we are. It is the latter kind of work that interests me because passionate work is, I believe, more likely to invoke a sense of calling. Vocation is about the meaning and purpose of our work and lives. An historical perspective follows.

Historically, the concept of calling has religious roots in both western and eastern cultures. In ancient India, the concept of dharma is the enactment of the path of sacred action whereby an individual is motivated by divine spirit to accomplish its purposes (Aurobindo, 1973). Because dharma is played out within one's mandated social role or caste, it is through self-interpretation and considerable tension with it, that one finds meaning and purpose in life. Karma Yoga is sacred work or action that is the expression of a higher Will or spirit (Bogart, 1994). In Judeo-Christian tradition, the notion of calling or vocation is the near equivalent of dharma, containing essentially the same three elements, i.e., the personal actions of a conscionable individual, inter-connectedness with and responsibility for others, and finally, a guiding spiritual element (Bogart,1994).

In the Middle Ages, monastic life spelled separation between spirituality and work within the world. The contemplative or religious life was considered superior to ordinary life. Callings were the realm of only a select few whereas routine, daily work was denigrated and held in low esteem. Later, the sixteenth-century Reformers, particularly Martin Luther, introduced a more inclusive and much broader view of calling. Vocation could be any form of labour, no matter how humble, that met the basic criteria of loving one's neighbour and conscientiously serving others within whatever station one found oneself. It could be enacted in the daily lives of all Christians. Conversely, Renaissance humanist thinking introduced the notion of self-discovery, self-determination, and the deliberate choice of one's way of life (Bogart, 1984).

Max Weber (1958), in his pivotal work, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, investigated the historical and economic roots of world religions and particularly the origins of the capitalist spirit within the Reformation's definition of calling, wherein life's meaning was enacted in labour in the service of God. Weber explored the linkage between Beruf (work as service) or calling and the development of capitalism. Personality development was the result of submission to the calling's discipline to service to an ideal or god and the subjugation of the natural self. Calling was viewed as the only hope in a civilization bereft of familiar traditions and customs.

Weber revived, through Luther's notion of calling, an ascetic ideal that was imbued with the spirit of capitalism and the Protestant work ethic. Integral to Weber's notion of calling is the accumulation of wealth and material goods; it suggested that God rewarded with worldly comforts those who followed their callings. Their wealth served as a sign to others of their special relationship with God (Goldman, 1988).

The Reformation linked economic growth, service, individualism, and rationalism to the concept of calling, thus facilitating the rise of capitalism and industrialization. This new concept of vocation differed from the Hindu notion of dharma insofar as it stressed man's capacity to rationally transform the world to his liking for the purpose of individual economic growth and progress (Weber, 1958).

There is, within the "vocational" literature, considerable opposition to this new concept of vocation and a general push for a return to its original meaning, as presented by Luther. This new notion of vocation is considered to be at the "root of the cultural crisis of modernity" (Bogart, 1994, p. 8). Cochran (1990) rejects today's "cheapened sense of vocation" (p.2) where it is largely associated with job, occupation, position, or profession. Homan (1986) too suggests that the traditional meaning of vocation -- a summons or calling -- is a better application to contemporary working experience than the frameworks currently used and calls for a return to the original notion of vocation.

Natale and Naher (1997) also criticize the effect of the Protestant work ethic in secularizing the notion of vocation, thereby divorcing spirituality from work. They mourn the loss of work perceived as "the central focus and influence of life...a call to greatness, fulfilling the potential in an aura of freedom...a service to humanity...a job well done for its own sake" (p. 239).

The notion of vocation has a long and interesting history, one that has evolved dramatically over the centuries. In the Middle Ages, it was a strictly religious concept wherein only a select few were "called." Martin Luther, while still maintaining a spiritual meaning, democratized the concept of vocation. The protestant work ethic and its link to capitalism gave rise to a strictly secular concept of vocation. Now, however, vocation is re-emerging within in its more traditional meaning, a meaning that includes spirituality, purpose, inherent gifts, service to others, and authentic existence. Vocation, as described within the "vocational" literature review that follows, has a strong affinity with its traditional meanings. Major themes interweave, overlap, and reconnect in ways that make them difficult to present in neat, distinct categories. Despite this challenge, I attempt to do so below.

## Major Themes within the "Vocational" Literature

### Vocation as summons, bidding, invitation, calling.

Vocation as calling is a predominant theme within the so-called "vocational" literature (Cochran, 1990; Homan, 1986; Bogart, 1994; Moore, 1992; Hillman, 1996). Cochran (1990) describes vocation as "the elevated sense of a life's calling" (p.2). Thomas Moore (1992) considers "all works a vocation, a calling from a place that is the source of naming and identity, the roots of which lie beyond human intention and interpretation" (p.181). He reminds us that the term "occupation" means "to be taken and seized...Work is a vocation: we are called to it..." (p. 182). Hillman (1996) includes calling as one important element, along with fate, character, and innate image, that comprises his "acorn theory." Bogart (1994) uses the terms vocation and dharma interchangeably, meaning "a fundamental calling...and of knowing with firm conviction one's place in the universe, and the...purpose and mission of one's life" (p.6). Both terms reflect a longing for one's calling, a task that contributes to others and fulfills the world.

### Vocation as Meaning embedded in Story

Much of the so-called "vocational" literature uses story as the method of choice for explicating the meaning, significance, and patterns of vocation. Numerous authors use others' life stories to demonstrate the importance of vocation within the context of real lives (Cochran, 1990; Bogart, 1994; Hillman, 1996; Anderson, 1996). Only Bogart (1994) provides a personal perspective on vocation by telling his own story of his experience of calling. He views vocation as an integrative and central facet of our personal narrative, a self-constructed life theme, an aspect of personal myth whose discovery involves "reflexive, self-interpretive activity" (p. 12). Thus, vocation as story must involve the making of meaning. Vocation void of meaning is not vocation.

Meaning making is the essence of story telling and therefore highly conducive to the discovery, through story, of the meaning inherent in vocation. It is for this reason that I have used the stories of three individuals with vocations to examine the phenomenon of calling and discover its meaning. The interviews, wherein each co-researcher tells his or her story, involves the same "reflexive, self-interpretive activity" suggested by Bogart.

Biographies and autobiographies are stories that present opportunities for the reader to gain valuable insight into those whose lives are "radiant with meaning" (Cochran, 1990, p. vii), people who serve as exemplary models for others seeking vocation. Cochran examined the life stories of twenty well-known people, including Margaret Mead and Yehudi Menuhin, all of whom had a clear mission and a sense of meaningful purpose that endured throughout their lives. Their vocations resonate with meaning and purpose and form the themes of their individual life stories. However, for Cochran, the individual story must transcend itself in order to become something larger, more universal. For Cochran, story is an experiential gestalt:

> The very power of story is that it is uniquely capable of representing human meaning as lived...In story, it is never a matter of a thing in itself, but of its role or fit within an emerging or established composition. (p. 189)

It is this role of story within a larger gestalt that makes it particularly useful and meaningful in a qualitative study of the lived experience of vocation, a study whose purpose is not "a matter of the thing itself" but rather the explication of a larger composition made up of essential shared structures.

Savickas (1997) argues that "science examines parts; personal stories explain the whole" (p. 9) and suggests that career counsellors use client narrative as a way to discover life themes. Edwards and Edwards (1996) provide various "story work sheets" to assist readers in identifying common threads and patterns within their lives. Vocation as story has been helpful in assisting clients to author their own lives in ways that use narrative as therapy (Jepsen, 1992).

Like Cochran (1990), Jungian psychologist James Hillman (1996) recognizes the value of story, life as a narrative, and subsequently uses stories to explore the callings of Golda Meir, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Mohandas Ghandi, among others. He exposes the extraordinary through an anecdotal method, not because ordinary people cannot achieve the extraordinary through vocation but because these stories "give our lives an imaginary dimension" (p.32). For Hillman (1996), the biographical question is essential: "How do I put together into a coherent image the pieces of my life? How do I find the basic plot of my story?" (p. 4 & 5). In other words, the core question is: *what is the meaning of my life?* Vocation in story form explores that meaning.

Congruence and Authenticity

A strong theme within the "vocational" literature is that of congruence and authenticity. Those with vocation experience congruence, "fit", cognitive unity and a solid self-concept wherein "person and work are united...[and] could not change...without a change in being" (Cochran, 1990, p.3). The self is not artificially compartmentalized into neat categories that separate and alienate one's parts from one's whole; rather, "work is our life" (Roszak, 1979, p. 232). Vocation, being greater than the sum of its parts, is a gestalt that is core to who we are. Bogart (1994) construes vocation as an integrative experience that "enables us to formulate and stabilize a [necessary] construct or image of the self" (p. 12). Vocation, then, allows us to be not just who we are, but more who we are. Congruence means "coming into alignment with one's true nature" (Bogart, p. 15).

Vocation is a concept supported by Heidegger's (1949, cited in Homan, 1986) notion of authentic existence: it implies responsibility to self and others, growth, courage, hope and care, "one's concern to relate oneself to the world and to accept oneself for who one is" (Homan, p. 15). Self-transcendence provides the authentic individual the ability to face with courage the uncertainties of the world, to be in the here and now while remaining open to the future and its infinite possibilities. One is born who one is but that does not mean that we arrive completed. To become more who we truly are, we must discover our vocation, our purpose, and find meaning in our lives. Even for those fortunate enough to know what they are meant to be in the world, there is a journey that must be undertaken, a process that Homan calls a quest, "a path of discovery through experience" (p. 17), with the purpose of being fully who one is as a human being. Homan differentiates quest from pursuit, which implies that one knows in advance what one is seeking.

Persons with a sense of vocation live a unifying story and experience a good fit between who they are and what they do. It is this kind of congruence that musician Yehudi Menuhin expressed when he stated "I did know, instinctively, that to play, was to be" (Hillman, p. 17). Vocation provides a sense of unity and wholeness that lends itself to spirituality: "Wholeness is holiness" (Cochran, 1990, p. 191).

### Vocation as Spiritual

The "vocational" literature resonates with the theme of spirituality (Hansen, 1997; Fox, 1994; Toms and Toms, 1998; Gilbert, 1998; Jones, 1996; Bolles, 2000; Moore,1992). Although there are many good definitions of spirituality, those of Yates, (1983), Boorstein (1980), and Kratz (1987) all convey a common theme of self integration and wholeness, consistent with the aforementioned theme of congruence. However, Matthew Fox's (1994) definition, because it is embedded within the context of work, is presented.

> Life and livelihood ought not to be separated but to flow from the same source, which is the spirit, for both life and livelihood are about Spirit. Spirit means life, and both life and livelihood are about living in depth, living with meaning, purpose, joy, and a sense of contributing to the greater community. (p. 1)

Of course, spirituality in the context of vocation does not necessarily have anything to do with religion or religious beliefs. Rather, it resides in the interconnectedness of all things and can be discovered through "soul work" that celebrates the whole person (Fox, 1994).

At the core of spirituality is love: "...because the love that goes out into our work comes back as love of self. Signs of this love and therefore of soul are feelings of attraction, desire, curiosity, involvement, passion, and loyalty in relation to our work" (Moore, 1992, p. 187). Our work reciprocates by providing satisfaction at a job well done, moral purpose, learning opportunities, excitement, and a sense of good fortune (Coles, 1993). "All work is empty save when there is love; And when you work with love you bind yourself to yourself, and to one another, and to God" (Gibran, 1984, p. 27).

Moore (1992) believes that the problem with modern manufacturing is "not a lack of efficiency, it is a loss of soul" (p. 183). According to Roszak (1979), part of the reason it is so difficult to find one's true vocation is that there is so much work in today's world that is inherently wasteful and frivolous; if one's work does not meet the criteria of honesty, usefulness, and a contribution to human need, then it cannot be a vocation. Natale and Naher (1997) propose an ethical, value-based management system to replace self-centredness and the strong influence of materialism. They call for institutional and corporate change that will revolutionize the workplace through "a transformation from ego to spirit" (p. 240) and are hopeful that "corporate culture and a true spirituality can exist" (p. 246). Richard Bolles (1991) has incorporated spirituality into his workshops, newsletters, and writings, in a way that is valuable for Christians and non-Christians alike. He describes vocation or mission as intersection, "...the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet" (p. 48).

Denise Bissonnette (1995) proposes a new paradigm for the role of career counsellor, as "cultivator" (nurturer) of the human spirit, in contrast with the "carpenter" (fix it) approach. Carpenters view employment as the solving of a job problem, a way to earn money; the cultivator sees work as the making of a life, as a means to self expression. Bissonnette uses the "tree of the spirit" as a metaphor to help people develop branches of hope, belief, courage and action, to enable them to find their vocation.

Spirituality as a theme overlaps considerably with the theme of responsibility and service to others. We enrich our spirits by loving others through service to them.

### Responsibility for and Service to Others

As previously discussed, the notion of vocation as responsible service to others originated with Luther and remains a common theme in current "vocational" literature (Cochran, 1990; Jones, 1996; Roszak, 1979; Toms and Toms, 1998). Included in what Jones (1996) calls "mission" is the implication that someone will be helped. Bolles (2000), citing Webster's dictionary, refers to mission as "a continuing task or responsibility that one is destined or fitted to do" (p. 241). Right livelihood drives us to seek challenge, responsibility, and service (Roszak, 1979). As globalization continues, so too should our awareness of the suffering and plight in all corners of the world. Social and political activism enables us not only to benefit others but also enhances our spiritual growth: "Not only does service relieve the suffering of others, it also transforms self-centredness" (Toms and Toms, 1988, p. 179). Gilbert (1998) too suggests we "commit to making work a spiritual path...in which service is the ultimate expression" (p. 40). Thus, in transforming the world through service, we transform and transcend ourselves.

Hardy (1990) recognizes the social context of work and suggests we ask ourselves some key questions:

> ...am I, in my job, making a positive contribution to the human community; am I helping to meet legitimate human needs; am I somehow enhancing or promoting what is true, what is noble, and what is worthy in human life? (p. 95)

Questions of love, service and responsibility for others are essentially spiritual questions.

### Innate Gifts used in Service for others

Although this theme is closely linked to the preceding one, the notion of innate gifts adds an important new dimension. Hillman's (1996) acorn theory attests to "the child's inherent uniqueness and destiny...each child is a gifted child, filled with...gifts peculiar to that child which show themselves in peculiar ways..." (p. 14). Just as the acorn contains within it all it needs to become a mighty oak, so too "each person bears a uniqueness that asks to be lived and that is already present before it can be lived" (p.6). Hillman's wonderful metaphor embraces the idea of the individual as a gestalt, a unique composition of characteristics whose whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Two basic precepts to the notion of "true work" are the use of one's gifts and making a meaningful contribution (Toms and Toms, 1988). The use of inherent gifts to serve others is central to the notion of vocation (Edwards and Edwards, 1996; Roszak, 1979; Hardy, 1974; Jones, 1996). If vocation invokes the use of one's gifts for the purpose of helping others, then work "ought to be designed so that we can in fact apply ourselves--our whole selves--to our calling" (Hardy, 1990, p. 174). Paradoxically, the call is itself "fundamentally not a demand but a gift" (Billing, 1964, p. v).

### Intrinsic purpose, our reason for being

Although Toms and Toms (1998) do not use the term "vocation", what they call "true work" implies vocation insofar as it addresses the same questions: *"Why am I here?...What is the purpose of my life? Whom or what do I serve?... What do I want to contribute to the world?"* (p. 25). Purpose provides meaning for our lives, serves as a life-organizing principle, builds on our gifts, and clarifies our interests and work (Leider, 1985). Leider cites Frankl's (1962) work to identify the sources of purpose: doing a deed (discover what needs doing and do it), experiencing a value (make your behaviours follow your beliefs; "walk the talk"), and through suffering (crises can help us grow). Frankl suggested that, instead of questioning life, we let life question us. Being open to life's questions is a way to discover a sense of purpose; it moves the individual from the role of passive onlooker to that of active seeker. Regardless of one's situation or context, one need only ask: *How may I serve?* to discover an immediate answer from the people and world around you.

### Passion, depth of emotion

Those with a sense of vocation experience a sense of elevation and are "startlingly and awesomely alive" (Cochran, 1990, p. 193), experiencing joy, energy, love, enthusiasm, zeal, vigor, and vitality. Strong negative emotions may co-exist with the positive but neutral or apathetic feelings do not appear to be within the realm of vocation. Rather, "If your mission holds no personal passion, it is not your path" (Jones, 1996, p. 49).

Vocation can also be a great source of comfort. Maryann Kovalski, illustrator and author, knew from the age of six what she wanted to do in life and experienced this knowledge as her "greatest comfort" (Jenkinson, 1991, p. 64). The love relationship between ourselves and work is reciprocal: "We are also loved by our work. It can excite us, comfort us, and make us feel fulfilled, just as a lover can" (Moore, 1992, p. 182). Apparently, the emotional impact of vocation is large and impressive.

### Vocation: inclusive or exclusive?

Although Luther democratized the notion of vocation, thereby making it attainable by all, there is some current debate about whether it truly is within the reach of everyone. Cochran (1990) and Homan (1986) contend that not everyone has a vocation. Homan believes that those with inauthentic existence lack the courage to transcend limitations and accept responsibility for themselves and others. He states: "Vocation is not something one has; it is something one seeks. One conducts a quest for authentic existence (p. 18).

### Vocation arrives in different ways

Hillman (1996) noted that "the call comes in curious ways and differently from person to person. There is no overall pattern" (p. 19). Bogart (1994) also suggests that there are numerous ways to arrive at a sense of vocation, including external initiation such as the vision quests of Native Americans, dream wisdom used to construct personal myths containing images of vocation, inner voice experiences, synchronistic events that provide direction or insight, the use of oracular or symbolic methods, and traumatic life events.

### Gifts revealed and nurtured by others

Hillman (1996) identifies the importance of an eye, the eye of another, to perceive that which is unique and special in someone else. He quotes Irish philosopher, George Berkely: "To be is to be perceived" (in Hillman, p. 126) and provides many examples of how others, in the roles of mentors, guides, managers, protectors, or coaches, perceived something special in another and helped to cultivate that gift. Truman Capote, William Faulkner, Gertrude Stein, and Charles Darwin are all cited as prime examples of how others' "Perception bestows blessing..." (p. 127) by enabling them to recognize their own gifts and fulfill their callings.

A similar phenomenon is what Jones (1996) calls the power of positive prophecy. Her positive prediction exercise instructs us to write down a positive prophecy from another and reflect on whether or not it will come to pass. Encouragement from another can reap wonderful benefits: "A compliment...could be used as a key to unlock your destiny" (p. 39). However, even negative predictions can sometimes have positive effects.

### The "Cross" of calling

Calling paradoxically includes both sorrow and joy, hope and despair, community and isolation, anticipation and frustration. Vocation includes sacrifice, represented by what Luther referred to as a "cross". Kolden (1994) interprets vocation's cross as instrumental in providing meaning to the negative experiences and emotions inherent in work. He notes that calling promotes to a higher level, i.e., the spiritual realm, questions of educational and career choice, career transition, and the application of one's gifts. Hillman (1996) uses the tumultuous life of Judy Garland to illustrate how "often the demands of the calling ruthlessly wreak havoc on the decencies of a well-lived life" (p. 48).

### Summary and transition

Although the above "vocational" literature review does not begin to cover all sources, it provides a fair representation of the emerging philosophy toward the notion of calling. Interestingly, almost none of the vocational literature makes mention of the term "career". For example, Bogart (1994) makes no mention whatsoever of career and, in fact, stresses that vocation may indeed have little or nothing to do with occupations or earning a living. Others, like Cochran (1990), make only peripheral references to it for the purpose of comparison.

## Career Development Literature

### Introduction

Career development theories have been developed largely within the twentieth century in response to various economic, political and social contexts. "Vocational guidance" is a relatively new term that has generally been replaced with the more modern terms, career counselling, career consulting, and career guidance. These terms are continually evolving in response to new marketplace conditions, such as globalization. Herr and Cramer (1992) consider career guidance and counselling as "becoming increasingly important sociopolitical processes in national development plans, policies, and legislation concerned with educational, career, and employment issues" (p. 2). Considering the focus of this mandate, it is not surprising that much of the career development literature has very little to contribute to the notion of vocation.

## Definitions

Most career development literature ignores the notion of vocation or uses it in a modern context that fails to capture its traditional meaning. Because Shertzer (1981) provides definitions for the full gamut of terms relevant to my study, I shall begin with these. He describes position as "a set of tasks performed by a person within a particular organization" (p. 179). Job is a "group of similar positions in one plant or location...the particular position a person holds or the particular kind of work done for pay in that position" (p. 179). Occupation is "the kind of activity needed to perform work tasks. The tasks are similar from situation to situation" (p. 179). Career is "the sequence of occupations, jobs, and positions held during the course of a person's lifetime" (p. 179). Finally, vocation is "like occupation, but broader in scope. It is used to convey a sense of life mission or purpose" (p. 179). Although Super's (1976) definitions of job and occupation are similar to Shertzer's, noticeably different is that of career. Although a number of conceptions of career exist (McDaniels, 1978; Hansen & Keierleber, 1978; Gysbers and Moore, 1981; Sears, 1982; Raynor and Entin, 1982), it is probably Super's (1976) definition of career that is the most frequently used:

> the course of events which constitutes a life; the sequence of occupations and other life roles which combine to express one's commitment to work in his or her total pattern of self-development; the series of remunerated and non-remunerated positions occupied by a person from adolescence through retirement, of which occupation is only one; includes work-related roles such as those of student, employee, and pensioner together with complementary avocational, familial, and civic roles. (p. 4)

Anna Miller-Tiedeman (1989) uses the terms *lifecareer* and *Life-as-career* to define her perspective, terms that sound remarkably like Super's. She defines career as life, therefore *lifecareer*, an all-encompassing concept inclusive of everything from jobs, occupations, and hobbies, to eating and sleeping. Neither Super's nor Miller-Tiedeman's definition is particularly helpful or enlightening. Both are so broad and inclusive of all of life's activities as to be virtually meaningless. Shertzer's definitions are more useful and meaningful within the context of my study and, I think, within the real world. There seems to be a general aversion to the term vocation and a growing attachment to an overly ambitious notion of career as a huge, complex, and universal experience. Besides, "...the old meaning of career still dominates. Most people still think of career as job or occupation" (Hansen, 1997, p. xii).

## Types of Career Development Theories

To begin, let us briefly review the history and types of career development theories, most of which have been formulated within the twentieth century. It has been these theories that have guided career counsellors in their practice. Career development theories and approaches have been organized in a number of ways (Herr and Cramer, 1992; Weinrach, 1979; Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996; Savickas & Walsh, 1996). Weinrach (1979) divides theories of career development into two basic types: structural approaches and process approaches. Herr & Cramer's (1996) text describes five major approaches to describing career development: (1) trait-and-factor, actuarial, or matching approaches; (2) decision theory; (3) situational, sociological, and contextual approaches; (4) psychological; and (5) developmental approaches. The goal of each theoretical approach is to bring some order into what is a very complex set of decisions. Each approach has strengths and weaknesses, dependent upon the client it means to serve. I shall use Herr & Cramer's classification system to further discuss some of the many career development theories in existence. As well, I have added another category, *contemporary approaches*, in an attempt to capture those theories moving closer to the notion of vocation.

### Trait-and-factor/Actuarial/Matching Approaches

Trait-and-factor approaches attempt to define the characteristics of the individual and those of work environments and then find a match between them. The school of applied psychology and individual differences, which focuses on the differences among people within occupational fields, forms the development and foundation of these approaches (Osipow and Fitzgerald, 1996).

Parsons (1909), Hull (1928), and Kitson (1925) are credited with developing the underlying tenets of trait-and-factor approaches (Osipow & Fitzgerald, 1996). Frank Parsons is probably the best known theorist in this theoretical camp and, according to Weinrach (1979), is considered the father of the guidance movement, and will therefore be discussed in greater detail.

Parson's (1909) approach was linear and logical and consisted of three basic principles for choosing one's vocation: knowledge of the self, knowledge of the principles of success and occupational information, and "true reasoning" (p. 5) on the relationship of the first two factors. What he proposed was a basic matching system to solve the problem of choosing a vocation "in a careful, scientific way" (p. 3).

Trait-and-factor approaches utilize a systematic exploration of the individual and the environment, currently enabled by the use of psychometric instruments that match personalities, interests, skills, and other attributes with "suitable" occupations. After taking this or that assessment tool, clients are then encouraged to apply a rational decision-making model to match themselves with suitable occupations. This approach uses a cognitive rationale and fails to deal with temperament, emotions, values, or one's particular set of circumstances in the world. Nonetheless, Weinrach (1979) considers the developments of interest inventories and other psychometric tools among the greatest contributions of this approach to the field of career development.

Jones et al. (1970) proposed that the trait-and-factor approach is underladen with the following assumptions:

1. Vocational development is largely a cognitive process in which the individual uses reasoning to arrive at his decision.
2. Occupational choice is a single event.
3. There is a single "right" goal for everyone making decisions about work.
4. A single type of person works in each job.
5. There is an occupational choice available to each individual. (p.8)

Robb (1993) criticizes the trait-and-factor approach to career planning and cites three limitations: it fails to consider the developmental stages through which people evolve; it is cognitive and does not consider the emotional factors, and it focuses on only one part of a person, i.e., the work role, while neglecting the others (p. 94).

### Decision Theories

Decision-making paradigms are based on the notion that a good or right decision can be made if one follows a prescribed set of logical steps aligned with external, rational principles. Like trait-and-factor theories, decision theories also have their roots in scientific analysis. However, decision theory also draws upon its origins in economics. A primary assumption is that

> one chooses a career goal or an occupation that will maximize gain and minimize loss... Implicit in such an approach is the expectation that the individual can be assisted to predict the outcomes of each alternative and the probability of such outcomes. The assumption is that the person will then choose the one that promises the most reward for his or her investment...with the least probability of failure. (Herr & Cramer, 1992, p. 164)

This perspective has resulted in the use by counsellors of paradigms or cognitive maps, models, graphs, decision trees, flow charts and game trees that assist them in their discussions on decision-making with clients. What differentiates decision theories from others is their fundamental focus on the process of decision-making (Herr and Cramer, 1992).

There are numerous versions of decision theory, including Expectancy theory, Self-Efficacy theory, the Social Learning approach to Decision Making, and finally, Cognitive Dissonance theory. I will expand on only one of the major decision theories, Krumboltz' (1979, cited in Herr and Cramer, 1992) social learning approach to decision-making, as but one example of many belonging to this category.

Krumboltz, Mitchell, and Gelatt (1975), and others developed a Social Learning theory of career decision making based on the social learning of behaviour proposed by Albert Bandura (1977) and rooted in behaviourism and reinforcement theory. This approach views personality, preferences for various activities, and behaviour, as products of social learning rather than innate sources. Krumboltz listed four main factors that influence the nature of career decisions: genetics, environment, learning experiences, and task approach skills. Three outcomes occur as a result of interactions among these four influences. They are (1) self-observation generalizations (e.g. occupational preferences, likes, dislikes, interests, and abilities), (2) task approach skills (e.g. career-decision making skills), and finally, (3) actions or behaviours that an individual engages in to make career choices (Herr and Cramer, 1992). Certainly, there is little here that informs vocation.

### Situational, Sociological, and Contextual Approaches

There are many theoretical variations of this category, all of which tend to focus on the environmental or structural factors that promote or limit career development. These could include cultural, economic, physical, social, and religious influences, industrial and work trends, and historical events (e.g., women's liberation movement, the depression, wars, etc.). Even one's birth order affects one's role in the family and creates a context within which one must make decisions.

Context is critical to this category of career development theories. Nothing occurs within a vacuum but rather within a complex and interwoven system of varying and ever-changing circumstances. Individuals will behave and think differently depending upon the family, school, culture, social class, pressure groups, community, and country in which they live. Social, economic, employment, and educational opportunities will vary from context to context. And, even within the same context, opportunities may be quite different depending upon gender, age, and marital status. The role of chance encounters and unexpected events are explored within accident theories. Counsellors must assess how these factors deter or promote good choice-making.

### Psychological Approaches

Psychologically-oriented career development theories focus on the effects of individual differences and personal development in determining one's destiny and creating careers through a series of decision-making steps. Psychologists typically focus on intrapsychic factors. Although the influence of psychology on career development theory is pervasive, I will focus on just two major theorists, John Holland (1985) and Anne Roe (1956).

Whereas Herr and Cramer (1992) classify Holland's (1985) theory as a psychological approach, Weinrach (1979) categorizes it as a structural approach to career development. Weinrach admits that Holland's approach does, however, digress from the typical trait-and-factor approach insofar that it presents a context that is more dynamic, timeless, complex, and descriptive. Weinrach humourously describes the theory as akin to the saying, birds of a feather flock together.

Holland categorizes people into six personality types and six corresponding work environments: Realistic, Investigative, Conventional, Enterprising, Artistic, and Social. These are portrayed in the format of a hexagon with the most similar orientations adjacent to each other while the most dissimilar orientations are situated at opposite sides of the hexagon. The more similar the fit between the personality type and the work environment, the higher the level of congruence. Cochran (1990) considers Holland's theory "admirable, elegant, and of great practical value in career counselling...[but] inappropriate for understanding a vocation" (p. 5).

Anne Roe's (1956) theory, based on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, is not associated with the use of assessment tools. She contends that genetic influences and one's upbringing and childhood influences impact the type of occupation sought (Weinrach, 1979). Maslow's five main groups of needs were considered important influences on occupational choice and satisfaction, as were genetic factors and parental child-rearing practices. Roe was also strongly influenced by the psychoanalytic notion that one's early years are strong predictors of adult behaviour (Herr & Cramer, 1992).

## Developmental Approaches

Developmental approaches to career development, also called process approaches, are really a sub-category of psychological approaches. According to the proponents of developmental approaches, career development is viewed as a process that is ongoing throughout life, with myriad choices made along the way, rather than as a single decision made during early adulthood. Rather than emphasizing matching, as Holland (1985) and Roe (1956) have done, developmentalists have focused on individual characteristics, how they change over time, and how to make effective decisions along the way.

Ginzberg et al (1951) were the first to incorporate a developmental perspective into theory by introducing the notion that occupational choice was a process, not a single event. However, Donald Super (1980) is probably the best known of the developmental or process theorists. Donald Super's life cycle approach to career development considers the various roles carried throughout one's lifetime, roles that increase or decrease in importance depending upon the stages and tasks confronting the individual at that particular phase. His theory includes five stages: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline. He suggests that career is more than a person's work role but must take into account other life roles as well, including child, student, leisurite, worker, citizen, spouse, homemaker, parent, and pensioner. Work is placed within a larger context called career or life.

Super (1990) outlined fourteen propositions underlying his theory, not one of which mentions vocation. Although Super may have incorporated developmental psychology to formulate his psychology of careers, his second proposition seems to indicate a still very strong connection to the trait-and-factor mentality: "Individuals may all be matched in their characteristics for a number of occupations" (p. 199).

Cochran (1990) criticizes Super's model for being "strangely lacking in trying to understand a vocation" (p.6). He suggests that a combination of Holland's and Super's approaches might be more meaningful, but I saw little in either theory or their combination that would inform my research topic. Initially considered a developmental theory, Tiedeman's (1984, cited in Herr and Cramer, 1992) later work became highly critical of and more differentiated from Super's approach which he found lacking in the notion of a complex personality that has the power to create a career. Self-empowerment is a central component of Tiedeman's theory.

Gysbers and Moore (1981) proposed a concept similar to Super's, that of *life career development* in an effort to expand career development from an occupational perspective to a life perspective. Here, the word *life* focuses on the whole person, the human career; the word *career* identifies and connects the roles, settings, and events that occur over a lifetime; finally, *development* recognizes the process of becoming who one is. Again, the same criticism applies: like Super's, the term is too broad and lacks the notion of calling.

Contemporary Approaches

I have added an additional category in an attempt to capture those theories moving closer to the notion of vocation. As examples of a few of the contemporary theorists, I have included Miller-Tiedeman, H.B. Gelatt, Hansen, and Peavy.

Anna Miller-Tiedeman (1989) promotes a comprehensive and holistic view of career development by incorporating the notions of synchronicity, intuition, a universal design, spirituality, bliss, and passion. She uses *lifecareer*, an all-encompassing term inclusive of everything from jobs, occupations, and hobbies to eating and sleeping. Despite this overly inclusive term, her real perspective is better reflected in her use of the term, *fullering*, which seems closer to the concept of vocation. *Fuller* is used as a verb meaning to do what you love in a joyful and trusting way. It includes a reliance on one's experience, intuition, intelligence, and "faith in the comprehensive, incisive intellectual integrity manifest by the universe" (p. 131). Fullering involves taking direction from within, by listening to one's soul, and using who one is to do what one is meant to do. Miller-Tiedeman calls it the "Be-Do-Have" approach that is in opposition with our western lifestyle that purports a "Have-Do-Be" mentality. Fullering promotes trust in oneself and the universe (or God, a supreme being, universal integrative force, or whatever one chooses to call it).

Miller-Tiedeman (1989) refers to a "higher universal design" (p. 29) that, when accessed through one's inner being, serves to support, guide, direct, and provide lessons and opportunities within one's *Lifecareer*. Alignment with one's inner being, attunement to inner messages, and following one's intuition, result in feelings of wholeness and oneness: "You are led through your lifetime by your inner learning creature, the spiritual being that is your real self" (Bach, 1977, cited in Miller-Tiedeman, 1989, p. 28).

Miller-Tiedeman (1989), unlike most career development theorists, deliberately does not provide a decision-making process. She believes that decision-making doesn't need to be taught and is a natural process "based on your perceptions of the world, your attitudes, your learning, your experience, your intuition" (p. 160). Instead of career planning, she proposes the Career Compass concept, "a personal device for determining one's career directions by means of an internal needle that freely turns on the combined information obtained from one's own experience, intuition, and intelligence" (p. 214).

Miller-Tiedeman draws comparisons between traditional approaches to career development and her own lifecareer approach: "job as career" versus "life as career"; self-concept theory versus the self-conceiving; "control of life" versus "cooperation with life"; "notion that the parts equal the whole" versus "the notion that the whole organizes the parts"; "goal setting and planning" versus "setting intentions and organizing"; "social context as secondary" versus "social context as primary"; "career is made" versus "career is lived"; "career as following a theory" versus "the individual as his or her own theorist"; career planning versus Career Compass; work skills versus life skills; and individual life versus interconnectedness of all life. As such, Miller-Tiedeman offers a fresh perspective that is an improvement over traditional career planning processes that stress rationality and work skills targeted to meet the ever-changing demands of a fickle marketplace. Unfortunately, she continues to do so under the guise of the term, *lifecareer*, a term too similar to that of Super's (1976) *career*. Rather than trying to fit within traditional "career" terminology, she would be wise to choose a different term, one that is closer to the meaning of vocation, as implied in the above comparison.

Increasingly, more and more authors are promoting the spirit, the soul, and the inner voice as the way to seek answers. H.B. Gelatt (1989) recognizes that people do not always make decisions rationally and calls for a holistic approach, one that uses all of one's faculties, the right brain and the left, the head and the gut, the body and the soul. Although Herr and Cramer (1992) place Gelatt squarely within the decision-making category, the author of Positive Uncertainty (1991), is difficult to categorize. Initially a proponent of the rational, objective decision-making system for counselling purposes, Gelatt admits, with some embarrassment, to having had a change of heart. In 1989, he amended his traditional model and proposed a new decision strategy called positive uncertainty, "a balanced, versatile, whole-brain strategy featuring the creative tools of flexibility, optimism and imagination" (p. 1).

Gelatt (1989) contends that we need both rational, linear decision-making as well as intuitive, non-rational, non-linear decision strategies that occur within a holistic framework. The former, by itself, is inadequate to the task of managing today's unpredictable, rapidly changing, and chaotic times. Positive uncertainty suggests paradoxical principles, focus and flexibility, awareness and wariness, objectivity and optimism, practicality and magic. Since we cannot predict the future, Gelatt urges us to create it because life tends to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. He advises us to treat intuition as real and goals as hypotheses that serve to guide but not govern.

Integrative life planning (ILP) is presented as an alternative to the "mechanistic, fragmented, reductionist view of the world and toward the new connected, holistic, integrated view of people and community" (Hansen, 1997, p. xii). Although Hansen credits Donald Super as a primary influence in developing her theory, she goes beyond the narrow confines of career development theory to include a variety of disciplines, from organizational development and sociology, to multiculturalism and theology. The ILP model is a systems approach to career development, connecting many aspects of life. It is comprehensive, draws on many disciplines and is inclusive of human differences.

Hansen identifies six critical tasks or life themes to help individuals plan for the twenty-first century, tasks which she feels have been given little or no attention in career development theory and practice. The critical tasks are: (1) finding work that needs doing in changing global contexts, (2) weaving our lives into a meaningful whole, (3) connecting family and work, (4) valuing pluralism and inclusivity, (5) exploring spirituality and life purpose, and (6) managing personal transition and organizational change. As each critical task is achieved, it connects the many parts of the ILP quilt, including identity, human development, life roles, and context. The second task, weaving our lives into a meaningful whole, uses the quilt as metaphor. Holistic life planning includes the weaving together of mind, body, and spirit in a unified approach that encourages intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and career development. An increasing compartmentalization of life is resulting in the growing need to balance work with other life roles for the purpose of greater personal integration.

It is the fifth task, exploring spirituality and life purpose, that is most relevant to the notion of vocation. This element is generally missing from career development theories. Spirituality is linked with meaning, purpose, personal values, self-actualization, wholeness and a connection with community. Not limited to religious connotations, spirituality adds a new dimension to the typically rationalistic career development theories. Although Hansen still thinks within the narrow boundaries of the term "career" when discussing the elements of spirit (hope, purpose, and wholeness), these elements seem better suited to the notion of vocation. Although her approach is useful, comprehensive, and cognizant of both the individual and world context, it regrettably fails to credit the role and spirit of vocation.

Peavy's (1996) constructivist model for career couselling provides a theoretical framework for informing and guiding practice. It recognizes the human need to "make meaning" so as to construct, through self-reflection and activity, the self. The life of an individual is perceived, not in the traditional career development perspective of traits and scores, but as a story or work or art that is being created through the lens of one's personal reality. Like Hansen, Peavy provides a "whole person" approach, one in which the focus is on life planning. Again, however, the use of the word, vocation, is implied but not used.

To summarize, contemporary career development theories represent an improvement over traditional theories insofar as they are beginning to acknowledge and incorporate elements typically associated with the notion of vocation. Spirituality, interconnectedness of all life, holism, intuition, soul, and service to others, are all emerging within the contemporary approaches. As such, the contemporary theorists represent a shift from the positivistic perspective of the traditional career development literature and a move toward critical social science. While this represents a move in the right direction, the career development field continues to refuse to give credit where credit is due and persists in adhering to its odd fixation with the term career and its equally disturbing avoidance of the term vocation.

## Psychology

### Introduction

I have deliberately limited the psychology literature to those theorists who, I felt, contributed to the notion of vocation. According to Treadgold (1999), transcendent vocations are those to which one feels called. He credits the link between the concept of vocation and healthy personality development to Freud, Jung, Maslow, and Erikson, among others. I briefly highlight some of those contributions in the following discussion.

### Selected Theorists

Sigmund Freud. Freud equated normal maturity with the capacity to work (arbeiten) and to love (lieben) or achievement and enjoyment (Merriam and Clark, 1991). For him, work does not provide the transcendent purpose of which Carl Jung (1953/1983) spoke. Rather, Freud believed that one's work was not necessarily a vocation or calling but that it could promote healthy personality development. Finding work that satisfied libidinal drives promoted healthy ego development whereas doing ungratifying work led to neuroses (Treadgold, 1999). Unfortunately, Freud seemed to view these concepts, i.e., *lieben* and *arbeiten*, as two separate entities operating in two distinct realms and did not appear to focus on the relationship between the two. His notion of love was genital love and was locked within a limited concept of pleasure. He relegated women primarily to the realm of libidinal love, for which he thought they were better suited, whereas the work of civilization was man's domain (Merriam and Clark, 1991). The love of which Freud speaks is considerably different from the kind of universal love integral to Victor Frankl's (1962) logotherapy.

Eric Erikson. Erikson's (1963) psychosocial stages of development expanded the concepts of working and living beyond the limited parameters of Freud's psychosexual theories. Erikson cites eight stages of development that lead, hopefully, to the mature culmination of identity (working) and intimacy (loving) tasks in mid-life.

The fifth developmental stage, *identity versus role confusion*, has received the most attention in career development because it deals with the questions: *Who am I? What do I have to offer? What do I value?*. He termed the mid-life stage *generativity*, a stage that involved caring for, establishing and guiding the next generation. This care, I believe, surpassed Freud's notion of achievement and libidinal love.

Erikson strongly influenced Tiedeman (1961) and his emphasis on career decision-making within a staging paradigm, and Nancy Schlossberg's (1978) proposition that the recurrent themes of adulthood are identity, intimacy, and generativity. These stages address the core issues of vocation: meaning or purpose, love and connection, and service (Herr & Cramer, 1992).

Carl Jung. According to Carl Jung (1934), following our vocation is a primary psychological need:

> True personality always has vocation, which acts like the Law of God from which there is no escape. Who has vocation hears the voice of the inner man: he is called. The greatness and the liberating effect of all genuine personality consists in this, it subjects itself of free choice to its vocation (Vol. 17, pp. 175-176).

Our inner voice, informed by spiritual seeds or archetypes, guides us to a destiny of transcendent meaning and individuation. For Jung, the actual work one does is not critical; rather, work is meaningful insofar as it allows the processes of self-integration and individuation to occur.

Many of Jung's concepts are currently drawn into much of the so-called "new age" or vocational literature (Bogart, 1994; Miller-Tiedeman,1989; Toms and Toms, 1988; and Hillman, 1996). Although Jung is not always credited, his notions of synchronicity and the universal or collective unconscious are seemingly ubiquitous. Tieger and Barron-Tieger (1993) use Jung's personality typology to examine the career implications for each personality type preference. They suggest that matching one's personality type characteristics with similar job characteristics could result in "perfect" careers. Not only do they neglect Jung's notions of vocation by substituting "career" and oversimplify his complex theory of personalities, they also mislead people into thinking that there is one perfect match for each of us.

Abraham Maslow. Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs suggests we are motivated by physiological needs, safety needs, belonging and social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualizing needs. He believed that everyone has an innate, self-actualizing drive, which includes the needs for truth, meaningfulness, aliveness, individuality, and peak experiences. Maslow (1968) described *intrinsic conscience* as "based upon the unconscious and preconscious perception of ...our own destiny...our own "call in life" (p. 7). His hierarchy of needs culminates in self-actualization, defined as "fulfillment of mission" (p. 25). Maslow would argue that one's experiences with calling lead ultimately to self-actualization. He described, in depth, the characteristics of peak experiences, those events that occur when people are at their most authentic, their most real. He suggested that there may be a link between peak experiences and the fulfillment of vocation: "It may turn out that *only* peakers can achieve full identity" (p. 111).

Maslow (1971), was convinced that vocation was a vehicle by which an individual could satisfy one's growth needs:

> [self-actualizers] are dedicated people, devoted to some task "outside themselves"...Generally the devotion and dedication is so marked that one can fairly use the old words vocation, calling, or mission to describe their passionate, selfless, and profound feeling for their "work"...something for which the person is a "natural", something that he is suited for, something that is right for him, even something that he was born for. (p. 291)

Victor Frankl. Frankl's (1962) theory of logotherapy has much to offer the study of vocation. Logos is a Greek word which denotes "meaning". Each of us has a particular vocation or mission in life and is therefore irreplaceable and uniquely required by the task and the world:

> Man's search for meaning is a primary force in his life...This meaning is unique and specific in that it must and can be fulfilled by him alone; only then does it achieve a significance which will satisfy his own will to meaning. (p.99)

Frankl developed logotherapy after his survival from a concentration camp in World War II where he observed that some people, despite incredible odds, survived, while others, despite more favourable circumstances, perished. What he discovered convinced him that personal pleasure or happiness are insufficient motivators. Rather, he considered happiness a by-product of the "will to meaning" (p. 99). Transcending self-interest through suffering, responsibility, and love leads to a sense of purpose and happiness. Suffering "ceases to be suffering...the moment it finds a meaning, such as the meaning of a sacrifice" (p. 115). Interestingly, Frankl considers that

> the question of the meaning of life may actually be reversed. Ultimately, man should not ask what the meaning of his life is, but rather he must recognize that it is he who is asked. In a word, each man is questioned by life; and he can only answer to life by answering for his own life; to life he can only respond by being responsible. Thus, logotherapy sees in responsibleness the very essence of human existence...(p.111)

Thus, vocation is about being asked, which is what being called really implies.

### Summary and Transition

Although psychology informs many career development theories that largely fail to address vocation, psychology itself contributes very strongly to our understanding of work and vocation as integral to mature, healthy development. In particular, it addresses the issues of identity, life meaning, and intimacy. I will now explore the final category of literature relevant to the concept of vocation. Adult education foundational literature strongly advocates the notion of vocation.

## Adult Education Foundational Literature

Collins (1991), Welton (1998), and Grace (1998) are extremely critical of current developments within the field of adult education. Although their criticisms specifically target the field of adult education, they are equally valid in describing the negative impact of current trends on all vocations. The developments Collins describes are not new. Eduard C. Lindeman (1961) addressed similar concerns about the threats of specialism in his classic book, The Meaning of Education. Collins believes the crisis has worsened since then and describes a "cult of efficiency" (p. 43) characterized by mechanistic, individualistic, technicist and technocratic values designed to serve capitalist, bureaucratic, corporate and institutionalized purposes. The current crisis is a situation that cannot deal with "the practical and ethical activities of adulthood" (p.5), activities that include the discovery and pursuit of one's calling or vocation. Collins proposes the adoption of the notion of vocation and a critically informed pedagogy to mitigate the effects of the efficiency trend.

Collins explicates the notion of vocation by pitting what is against what could be. He draws stark comparisons between the cult of efficiency and the value of human fulfillment, between control and caring, between mechanistic and meaningful, between individualism and social/political context, between competency and competence, between technicist and ethical, between prescriptive and contextual, between status quo and social action, and between power and resistance. By reviving the notion of vocation and its embodiment of human fulfillment, care, meaning, service, competence, ethics, and social action, Collins offers hope even within today's frightening world economic conditions.

Collins contends that vocation embodies a sense of mission, a "passionate devotion" (p. 41), a commitment to develop a more just and humane society, and a personal responsibility to critically reflect on one's work, judgements, and practice. It is this last component that contributes a powerful new dimension to the concept of vocation. It is not enough to care and act; rather, critical reflection is a preliminary step integral to the discernment of appropriate care and action. Eduard Lindeman (1961) describes a similar reflective process in his conception of adult education as "a continuing process of evaluating experiences, a method of awareness through which we learn to become alert in the discovery of meanings" (p. 85).

Competence is an aspect of vocation defined by Collins as "a predisposition to take the pause necessary for identifying, focusing, and reflecting on the practical problem at hand" (p. 46). He is very clear that competence cannot be measured by the "restrictive determinism of competency-based formats" (p. 47). While competence is an improvement over competencies and skills, it fails to address gifts and talents, which appear to be central to the notion of callings.

Lindeman ( 1961) addresses vocation within the context of meaning-making, education, gifts, joy, and service to others. He recognizes the connection between meaning, sense of purpose and the utilization of our inherent gifts. He knows that we have "become weary of being counted; we want to count for something" (p. 38). He speaks of the citizen who "grows apathetic over the efficiency of industry because each...make(s) no use of his personal gifts" (p. 38).

The individual with a true vocation knows how to achieve "pure delight for its own sake" (Lindeman, p.39). Like Collins (1991), Lindeman recognizes the need to utilize one's talents within the context of "communities of fellowship" (p. 9). For a vocation to be truly a vocation, it must connect in a beneficial and meaningful way to the larger social context. It is this larger social, political, and economic realm that makes critical adult education theory so valuable to the topic of vocations.

Michael Welton (1998) describes the effects of globalization in dire terms: "The language of economy, money and market has colonized our public vocabularies, displacing spiritual, moral and social-critical vocabularies" (p. 366). Conditions wrought by *laissez-faire* global capitalism include the deprivation of meaning, the depletion of solidarity with others, the de-stabilization of personality, and the erosion of the *lifeworld*. The depletion of solidarity is a result of the ideology of individualism. Our solidarity with others in the workplace is increasingly replaced by the bottom line, competition, mistrust, and ultimately, isolation. This social fragmentation is a condition which Hayes (in Hart 1992) refers to as "mobile solitude" (p. 153). Vocation and individualism are concepts in direct competition with one another. The very definition of vocation recognizes the importance of social context and requires a commitment to serve others whereas individualism requires only that the individual pursues and attains what is good for himself or herself. Welton proposes an antidote to this *depletion of solidarity* dilemma in the form of discussion, debate, and dialogue among citizens striving toward the ideal of deliberative democracy. Despite the adoption of "consumerism as surrogate god" (p. 368), Welton is hopeful "because people cannot live by the market alone...[and] are inherently creatures of meaning and sociality" (p. 369).

Andre Grace (1998) describes a similarly stark situation when he refers to the "instability and insecurity generated by...governments and other institutions concerned with survival in a global economy" (p. 115). Like Welton, Grace (in press) recognizes the disastrous effects wrought by the "undermining of the social as it melds with the economic" (p. 115). He acknowledges the personal, social, political and cultural crises wrought by a knowledge and service economy driven by consumerism. Grace cleverly describes the postwar practice of adult education as the *Ization Syndrome*, one that embraced individualization, professionalization, institutionalization, and technoscientization, and, in postindustrial times, performativity at the service of techno-science.

The adult education foundational literature contributes significantly to the explication of the notion of vocation (Collins, 1991; Welton, 1998; Lindeman, 1961). It addresses the main elements of vocation, but it does so in a unique way, that is, within the larger context of social, institutional, economic, and political arenas. As such, it represents the critical social science paradigm.

## Summary

I have attempted to capture within this chapter the characteristics of vocation, as revealed within four chosen categories of literature. Although each category may lack some essentials, the four work together to create a gestalt of meaning that effectively places vocation in context within and across numerous fields. Although by no means exhaustive, it serves as a solid backdrop, a lens through which to consider the lived experience of vocation.

In chapter 3, the method and procedures that were used in this study are discussed in detail.

# Chapter 3: Method and Procedures

## Introduction

A natural science perspective would raise questions about whether or not particular hypotheses could be proven or disproven. The methods would involve precise measurement and the scientist would strive for "truth", objectivity, and a means to predict and control the object of inquiry. Using the natural science or quantitative paradigm would involve scales to rate or measure vocation and the results would be used to predict success or lack of success in achieving a sense of vocation. It became very clear to me that my question did not lend itself to the natural science paradigm. Rather, the choice of a qualitative research method for this study seemed totally suitable and natural to me.

I completed the requisite research method courses, Educational Psychology 501 and 503, at the very end of my Master's program. I then discovered that this was rather unusual and that most students generally take this type of course at or near the beginning of their program. My first foray into research was Educational Psychology 501 which had a major focus on quantitative research. On the first day of class, when Dr. Frender announced that he was a convergent thinker, I knew I was in trouble because I am a very strong divergent thinker who loves the interconnectedness among seemingly unrelated ideas and concepts. I have a very strong preference for what Dr. Carl Jung (1923) called intuition, a method of taking in information "when there are no facts, nor moral supports, no proven theories, only possibilities" (Wheelwright, 1973). For me, one idea leads to ten others, each of which expands even further. So, considering my personality, I knew immediately that this class would be very challenging; I would have to narrow in on ideas rather than expand from them. Nevertheless, I did very well in Dr. Frender's class and even considered quantitative research methods for some of my thesis ideas. However, I did so only because I thought they would be simpler, quicker, and more straight-forward than qualitative research, of which I still knew relatively little.

The following semester, I enrolled in Educational Psychology 503, a qualitative research method course. While fellow students complained about the ambiguity and lack of statistical validity, I reveled in the delightful discovery of a research style that suited me and my divergent thinking style. I felt like I had come home. I had arrived! I was immediately comfortable with qualitative research and knew I had found my niche. I then understood why my previous research topic ideas had been rejected by my previous advisor: I had been trying to force qualitative research topics into quantitative methods. Suddenly, everything came together--the research question, the method, and the procedures.

## Evaluation of the Phenomenological Method

Although my instincts told me that phenomenology was the method of choice for my study, I realized that I needed to justify my choice. Prior to selecting a research method, it is essential to critically evaluate it in terms of its suitability for the research question being posed. Evaluations of natural science methods typically include the criteria of validity, reliability, and generalizability. When evaluating the phenomenological method using these criteria, it is essential to remember that the phenomenological method is based on different assumptions than those which undergird natural science methods (Wertz, 1986).

### Validity

The notion of validity is an important one for any researcher engaged in any form of scientific research. In traditional experimental research, validity refers to how well an assessment instrument measures what it claims to measure. However, in qualitative research, the notion of validity is closely linked to credibility, the issue of researcher bias. Presumably, explicating one's forestanding biases increases the credibility of the study and therefore increases validity. Prior to beginning research analysis, the researcher must "bracket" or suspend his or her preconceptions, biases, and beliefs, for the purpose of fostering greater openness to the phenomenon as it is expressed by the co-researchers. The process of bracketing is intended to achieve more "control" in the study and provides the reader with a better understanding of how the researcher arrived at his or her interpretation of the data (Giorgi, 1975). Self-reflection is meant to enhance objectivity and is a process that is should be ongoing throughout the entire course of the study. However, Salner (1986) contends that, despite our best efforts to "demonstrate cognizance of [one's] position" (p. 115), qualitative research cannot ever demonstrate complete validity because "it cannot be value-free and is judged truthful [valid] to the extent that it is humanly possible" (p. 115). She concludes that "it makes more sense to talk in terms of defensible knowledge claims than of validity per se (p. 128).

In addition to bracketing one's presuppositions, the researcher can strengthen the validity of the research study by consulting with each co-researcher to verify whether the interpretation is an accurate description of his or her experience.

A third method of increasing validity in both quantitative and qualitative research is the use of coherent and persuasive arguments to build a compelling case that substantiates the researcher's interpretation of the data (Osborne, 1990). Language impacts validity because it is open to interpretation and is dependent on the researcher's level of writing skill. Salner (1986) concedes that the study of language is, regrettably, not part of the training of the social researcher but argues that it should be.

A fourth method of increasing validity or credibility is through the process of triangulation "whereby a variety of data sources, different perspectives or theories, and/or different methods are pitted against one another to cross-check data and interpretation" (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, p. 247). In this study, both investigator and data triangulation were used to strengthen validity. For example, I conducted a corroborative interview with each co-researcher in order to validate my interpretations. As well, if a theme emerged for two of the co-researchers but not a third, I would ask the third whether or not this theme had been part of his or her experience or not. In addition to the co-researchers, other investigators included my thesis advisor, Dr. Sue Scott, and a trusted friend and Ph.D. candidate who works in a field similar to mine. I presented both of them with all three levels of my data analysis for their review and input. Often, through follow-up discussions, their more objective stances and greater knowledge bases would add new perspectives and insights to my interpretations. In this way, my interpretations of the data were cross-checked by the co-researchers themselves, and by two academics with backgrounds in adult education and educational psychology.

Finally, validity can be further strengthened by the extent to which the researcher's interpretation is deemed true for others who have experienced the phenomenon but are not co-researchers in the study (Shapiro, 1986).

### Reliability

Natural science methods seek reliability in terms of consistency of results over time, across variations of the same testing instrument, and within the same test. Precision, replicability, and stability of measurement as they pertain to factual results are the goals of the scientific researcher. However, the phenomenologist focuses on meaning rather than facts, meaning that does not vary across variations in perspectives and facts. Wertz (1986) describes reliability in phenomenological research as "the persistence of meaning through the factual variations" (p. 200). For this study, the themes, or meaning units, were quite consistent across three co-researchers with very different vocations. Had I chosen three musicians, the reliability may have been greater but the validity of the data may have been jeopardized. However, by choosing a musician, a veterinarian, and a special education teacher, achieving reliability was more challenging but also more important.

### Generalizability

Generalizability in natural science means statistical generalizability or external validity whereas phenomenological methods seek to attain *empathic generalizability*. The descriptions of co-researchers' experience should strike a chord of resonating empathy in others who share that same experience. Thus, "generalizability is established a postiori rather than a priori procedure..." (Osborne, 1990, p. 82). In qualitative research, generalizability is also referred to as *transferability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, generalizability is deemed an impossible task because, unlike quantitative researchers who are expected to be precise about external validity, the qualitative researcher

> can only set out working hypotheses together with a description of the time and context in which they were found to hold…[and] cannot specify the external validity of an inquiry…[but] can provide only the thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility…It is not the naturalist's task to provide an index of transferability; it is his or her responsibility to

> provide the data base that makes transferability judgments possible on the part of potential appliers.(Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316)

## Rationale for a Phenomenological Approach

> ...the phenomenologist must ask: What human experience do I feel called upon to make topical for my investigation? (van Manen, 1990, p. 41)

The above quote aptly captures elements of both my method and my research question. Phenomenology is the research method I have chosen to explore the experience of calling, and I do "feel called upon" to pursue my question. Cochran (1990) argues against the use of a quantitative research framework, suggesting that scientific methods cannot capture the experience of vocation. Vocation is attached to meanings and "meaning is of essential concern to the qualitative approach" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 31). The phenomenological method of research is ideally suited to this research because it enables the researcher to access human experience and elucidate its structural components (Polkinghorne, 1981).

I hoped to capture the deep meaning of the lived experience of so-called "ordinary" individuals who were living their vocations. I needed a research method that would permit me to examine how the co-researchers experienced the phenomenon of calling. Natural science or empirical methods attempt to determine relationships among variables which can be manipulated, controlled and measured. Empiricism is the modus operandi of these methods, methods that stress rigid operational definitions and rational objectivity at the expense of experience (Colaizzi, 1978).

Considering that phenomenological research focuses on Patton's (1990) question: "What is the structure and essence of experience of this phenomenon for these people?" (p. 69), the choice seemed obvious. As well, phenomenology seems a natural method for the research of counselling issues because counselling practice and existential-phenomenological thought are closely linked (Osborne, 1990). As a career counsellor, this made total sense to me.

Phenomenology involves the assumption that "experience is in and of the world" (Colaizzi, 1978, p.52). The individual and his world form a cohesive unit, that is, they "co-constitute" each other (Valle & King, 1978), and meaning develops out of this co-constitution. Because the person and his or her context are inseparable, the meaning of one's experience can only be captured within the unified concept of both. Thus, the job of the phenomenological researcher is to study the experiences of phenomena as they are lived in the real, everyday world. To do this, "a descriptive approach [is] in order to obtain the facts of a given experience in order to clarify their meaning" (Giorgi, 1986, p. 8) rather than the objective, explanatory, and measurable approach of quantitative research (Seamon, 1982). Phenomenological research challenges the natural science paradigm by stressing the relevance of existential-phenomenological thought and its application to all kinds of otherwise neglected phenomena (Giorgi, 1971).

Giorgi (1975)'s *Lebenswelt* or *life-world* includes virtually all of one's physical and affective experiences and the meanings derived from them; it is the everyday world as it is directly and immediately experienced "prior to explanations and theoretical interpretations of any kind" (p. 99). As much as is possible, entering the life-world of those who have experienced a vocation will be necessary in order to gain an understanding of the essential experience of vocation.

The goal of phenomenological research is the revelation of essences or structures that make up the experience of a particular phenomenon (Polkinghorne, 1981). These essences or structures are those that are generalizable across all experience. Thus, the phenomenological researcher must "seek out within the uniqueness of concrete phenomena more general experiential structures, patterns, and essences" (Seamon, 1982, p. 121).

I have chosen a phenomenological method, one that seemed the most appropriate for capturing the essence of vocation. However, my approach is also somewhat interpretive insofar as it requires the researcher to reflect on the data to discover meaning. The researcher should not, however, impose meaning because

> reflection is not speculation but genuine finding, requiring the most rigorous grasp of the essence of the phenomenon. The researcher thereby grasps the whole of the phenomenon through the part expressed by the subject, making explicit the implicit root of the matter. (Wertz, 1984, p. 32)

Thus, I have included elements of the narrative approach because there is necessarily some interpretation that goes on in the selection of "narrative threads, tension, and themes that constitute the inquiry..." (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p. 171). It was in my narrative descriptions of the co-researchers' experiences, also called the *overall synthesis of the experience of vocation* where I had the greatest opportunity to pull the parts into a more coherent whole.

## Bracketing and Autobiographical Reflection

As previously mentioned, an important facet of phenomenological research is the practice of bracketing. Bracketing is a process of self-reflection whereby researchers attempt to identify their presuppositions or biases toward the phenomenon in question. Presumably, through bracketing, the researcher is better able to capture the essential structure or deep meaning of someone else's experience. The aim of phenomenological research is presuppositionless description (Giorgi, 1975), an impossible goal because the researcher is herself an instrument of research and interpretation and therefore cannot be totally without bias. The researcher and the researched are both part of an interactional system wherein one cannot be defined without reference to the other (Salner, 1986). As such, the researcher is both a strength and a liability. However, it is hoped that, by explicating one's biases, the researcher is in a better position to allow the data to speak for themselves.

The question of examining existing presuppositions is critical to the validity of any scientific study. This is even more relevant within the context of phenomenological research because phenomenologists are breaking from the traditional presuppositions of neutrality, control and the separation of subject and object. The making explicit or bracketing of one's assumptions will facilitate a better understanding of the phenomenon as it is presented by the participants and will provide the reader with a framework in which to assess the validity of the data (Wertz, 1984).

Colaizzi (1978) describes the need to be explicitly aware of the "content-method-approach unity" (p. 55) in acknowledging that the question under study and the chosen method of examination are direct results of the researcher's approach. The phenomenological researcher needs to thoroughly examine the colour of the lens through which she looks by explicating her presuppositions of the research question. Colaizzi (1978) suggests answering the following questions in order to unearth any prejudices, presuppositions that the researcher may have:

> Why am I involved with this phenomenon? How is it that I come to study this question? How might the constituents of my unique personality condition my selection and study of this particular phenomenon to investigate? (p. 55)

My intent in this section is to make explicit my personal interest in the phenomenon of callings, identify my presuppositions, and answer the above questions. By doing so, I hope to provide the reader with a framework for assessing the validity of my data analyses and interpretations (Wertz, 1984).

As phenomenological researchers, we are attempting to experience the experience of others. Through their stories, we may reflect upon and re-experience our own. The interview process, particularly one that is as unstructured as possible, enables the participant to tell his or her own story, in spoken language. There is recognition that

> ...in the construction of narratives of experience, there is a reflexive relationship between living a life story, telling a life story, retelling a life story, and reliving a life story. (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 160)

As researchers, we also have our own stories, experiences that have helped us shape the research question. The process of bracketing our presuppositions is a process grounded in our own stories:

> ...in personal experience methods we must acknowledge the centrality of the researchers' own experience: their own tellings, livings, relivings, and retellings. Therefore, one of the starting points is the researchers' own narratives of experience. (Clandinin & Connelly, p. 161)

For this reason, I have included a brief autobiographical reflection that describes the conception and evolution of my question. My personal reflection follows.

### My Experience of the Question

On a personal level, I have always been intrigued by people who had experienced a vocation. Their lives seem so ordered, simple, straightforward; they seemed bereft of all the inner turmoil and self-doubt that seemed to plague the rest of us. How, I wondered, did they manage to come upon their purpose in life; how did they work with such conviction and strength toward their destiny? They seemed the very embodiment of determination, focus, commitment, wisdom, and certitude. In contrast, I seemed to have floundered most of my life. Like many people, I mostly fell into things. I had a clearer understanding of what I *didn't* want than what I did want and my approach was consequently haphazard and shiftless. Whenever I heard someone say, "Oh, she's a born athlete", I would think, "Why can't I be a *born* something?" What a wonderful notion this represented -- to be born something, to be born *for* something, for some purpose or quest.

As a child, I had experienced a calling of sorts but was discouraged from pursuing it. I had wanted to be an artist; I drew, coloured, and painted; teachers sent me home for the weekend with an abundance of art supplies which I would promptly transform into my art, to be posted and praised on Monday mornings. I successfully entered local and national competitions and wanted to learn more about all kinds of art. Although I received considerable encouragement and acknowledgement of my talent, I was cautioned not to take it too seriously. After all, how could one possibly earn a living as an artist? I should be practical and find something suitable to fall back on until I married and raised a family.

I was raised in the Catholic church during a time when the church and its representatives were highly respected, even revered. Most of my grade school teachers were nuns. The location of our church next door to our school facilitated our many forays to mass, confession, communion, and other rituals. The nuns spoke frequently of callings and vocation. They themselves, had, after all, been *called* to do God's work. They spoke of the obligation to use one's God-given gifts for the betterment of others; to do otherwise was considered wasteful and sinful. Thus, the notion of callings, albeit framed within a religious context, was nonetheless commonplace and generally accepted in my small world. Although I eventually figured out that much of their rhetoric was intended to encourage us to "don the habit" as they had, I continued to believe that there was some resonating and universal truth in what they had said about vocation.

Despite having been an excellent student, I received absolutely no guidance or information. Increasingly, my academic ability became a burden and a curse. It raised people's expectations of me but provided no direction. I was as equally capable in Algebra and Physics as I was in English and Social Studies. I envied people who excelled in only one or two subjects because their choices seemed so much easier. Later, while a second-year university student still seeking direction, I visited a counsellor who administered an interest inventory. Although she did analyze the results, she took no interest in me as a person, and seemed totally preoccupied with her next curling bonspiel. Her behaviour impressed me as something I would not want to emulate and perhaps even motivated me to approach my own career consulting practice very differently.

I had a mother who experienced considerable regret and frustration at not being able to pursue her dream. She had been a good student but could go only as far as Grade eight in her small farming community. In order to pursue further studies to become a nurse, she would have to attend the Ursuline academy as a resident student. Her father, a staunch Catholic who believed that one was guaranteed a spot in heaven if a family member joined the clergy, gave her a choice. He would pay for her further education on one condition: that she become a nun. I am testimony to the decision she made. Although she was able to find some solace in the successes of her nine children, my mother always experienced a certain yearning for what could have been.

As the mother of two daughters, aged nine and twelve, I have a vested interest in their life options and choices. I want them to make choices that allow them to tap the core of who they are, to live life as they see fit, to be fulfilled and happy. Observing them has convinced me of the validity of Jung's (1923) theory of personality types; they have distinct, inherent qualities that were present from the moment they were born. I want for them what I am only beginning to achieve for myself, that is, a vocation, a passion, a sense of purpose.

In my social circle, I saw patterns that I found disturbing. Although my friends and colleagues are, for the most part, bright, capable professionals, I recognized among them an all too familiar angst, a sense of persisting dissatisfaction, a feeling of really not quite fitting anywhere. Many of them joked about still not knowing what they wanted to be when they grew up. They were disillusioned with office politics, inadequate pay and/or recognition, on edge due to competitiveness engendered by fear and mistrust in a climate where downsizing is an ongoing threat, and exhausted by ever-increasing workloads and technology that invades their family and social lives. They seemed to reflect the statistics gleaned from a national American survey that indicated that ninety-five percent of the working population do not find their work enjoyable (Sinetar, 1987). Why is it, I wondered, that so few people seem impassioned about their work? Where have all the callings gone?

My question is also embedded in my work experience as a career counsellor/consultant. Throughout seventeen years in various environments, including both public and private sectors and self-employment, an odd nagging has persisted at the back of my mind, an uneasiness with the way I did my work. Was I truly helping people? What value did I contribute? Was the rational decision-making strategy I preached really effective? Couldn't I be doing more?

Currently, as a human resources/career consultant for an international corporation, I counsel individuals from all walks of life who are undergoing major life transitions due to corporate restructuring. Often, they are relieved to no longer be working at something that had become a poor fit and yet they are afraid to move forward, doubtful about whether fulfillment and work are compatible. Their job loss often provokes a crisis; after all, they have lost not only their income, but also their schedule, their social relationships, their routines, even their reason for getting out of bed in the morning.

As part of our orientation interview, I routinely and deliberately ask my clients how they ended up doing the kind of work they had been doing. Invariably, they respond with something like, "Oh, my father knew somebody at the plant and so I got a job--I've been there twenty-five years now", "I just kind of fell into it", or "My sister went into engineering and seemed to like it so I thought I'd give it a try too." Although some had luckily fallen into suitable occupations, others had spent decades doing work they despised. Surely, I thought, life's major decisions demand more time and attention than we seem to give them.

I have been the typical career counsellor; I taught and applied rational decision making methods, stressed the importance of the new labour market and the need to develop the right new skill sets it demands, and used an assortment of vocational assessment tools to assist clients in making the right choice. Despite the abundance of career development theories and the plethora of vocational assessment tools available at my fingertips, I often felt inadequate to the task of helping my clients make meaningful life and work decisions. I often felt that I had somehow missed the mark and gradually found myself moving more and more into non-rational approaches such as visualization exercises, personal mission statements, and positive affirmations. Although initially nervous about how these techniques would be accepted by clients, I soon found that most were very receptive. Even more important, I discovered they worked!

Perhaps I want for my clients what they no longer expect for themselves. I want them to be passionate about what they do, see life as an adventure, take risks, meet challenges, and be true to themselves. This is what I want for myself as well. Yet, it seems that it is too often the mundane, not the magical, that rules: the mortgage needs paying, the children need braces, there's no time or money to retrain, or there has been a recent divorce. Passion, adventure, and risk-taking quickly fall to the wayside.

It has been my own experience, my personal narrative, my story, that has provided me with a starting point from which to begin my inquiry. It has provided me a focal point from which to consider those experiences relevant to the topic of vocation. Based on my autobiographical reflection, I have been able to extract my presuppositions.

Presuppositions and Preconceptions. These include:

1. Callings exist. Some people experience them.

2. People who experience callings will have early memories about them. There will be a sense of "knowing" that there is something special that one has been called to do and be.

3. There is a connection between spirituality and vocation.

4. Called individuals will experience a strong affinity for and deep identification with their work.

5. Women will experience more difficulty in finding, pursuing, and maintaining a vocation because they will be burdened with caregiving responsibilities and will experience work/family conflict.

6. We are born with distinctive personalities, preferences, and potentials. Following and developing one's talents and preferences is more likely to lead to fulfillment.

7. Current career development models are insufficient methods of assisting people in the discovery and pursuit of vocation.

8. Helping others will be important to those with a vocation.

In an attempt to make myself truly open to the lived experience of my co-researchers, I made an honest attempt to review any biases or presuppositions that could influence my research. Hopefully, bracketing my assumptions will allow the data to better speak for themselves while providing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon as presented by the participants. As well, the explication of my own experiences and biases will provide the reader a better perspective from which to consider the validity of the data (Wertz, 1984; Kvale, 1986).

## Participant Selection

Whereas quantitative methods promote random or representative sampling, purposive sampling is appropriate for qualitative research because it allows the researcher to increase the scope of data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For the purpose of more fully illuminating the experience of vocation, I chose *intensity sampling* (Patton, 1990); that is, I chose individuals who had rich experiences of vocation. In addition, I considered, selected, eliminated, reconsidered, and newly selected co-researchers throughout the thesis project, a process Lincoln and Guba (1985) call *emerging sampling*. This gave me the flexibility to freely build on my unfolding story of vocation and not be restricted by lukewarm or misleading interviews.

In phenomenological research, the most important criterion to consider when selecting participants is the individual's ability to richly and thickly describe the phenomenon in question (Osborne, 1990). Colaizzi (1978) concurs: "Experience with the investigated topic and articulateness suffice as criteria for selecting subjects" (p58). Osborne (1990) prefers the term *co-researcher* to the term *subject* because it "emphasize[s] the co-operative and voluntary nature of the research" (p. 82). In an effort to elucidate the phenomenon, the researcher and co-researchers collaborate on a process of inquiry wherein the researcher attempts to enter the participants' world. For this study, co-researchers had to meet four basic criteria in order to participate in the research process. First and most important, the co-researchers must be directly involved in pursuing what they consider to be a vocation or calling. Second, they must be pursuing a non-religious or secular vocation. Third, they must be willing and able to articulate their experiences and finally, they must be so-called "ordinary" people, not well-known or easily identified. I used these four criteria as the screening mechanism with which to select appropriate candidates.

The process of finding people who met these criteria was a relatively easy and emergent one. I have a strong network of contacts within career development, human resources, management consulting, and adult education circles; my work as a career consultant brings me into contact with many people every day; and I have been a part-time graduate student for four years. Consequently, I have had considerable opportunity to discuss my thesis topic with many people whose backgrounds and situations tend to promote a natural interest in the notion of vocation. Basically, I talked to clients, acquaintances, friends, and colleagues about my research topic and then asked them if they or anyone they knew had experienced a calling. I simply put the word out and received a very interested response. This approach to selecting co-researchers is true to the notion of an individualized, emerging research design, the practice of which is generally recognized in the human science field (Giorgi, 1970; Colaizzi, 1978; Gadamer, 1985).

Whenever I described my thesis topic to anyone, they initially seemed somewhat surprised and taken aback. After their initial reaction, they asked more questions and almost immediately began to reflect upon whether or not they themselves had a vocation. Their speculations invariably led to discussions about someone they thought had a strong sense of vocation. I would ask for permission to contact that individual and would then call to make the initial contact.

Everyone I asked agreed to an interview, even a very busy epidemiologist who works, on average, eighty hours per week. Although an interesting and brilliant man, I chose not to use him in my thesis because it was not clear to me that he did, in fact, have a calling. Although he seemed to share many characteristics and experiences with the three co-researchers used in my study, I had some questions as to whether his obvious drive came from a calling or from a compulsive personality. Not being a psychologist or a psychiatrist, I was not able to make that distinction.

An artist, a young woman heavily in debt from student loans and no job prospects, was also eager to be interviewed. Although I did a preliminary phone interview, I was not quite ready to begin that component of my research at the time she called. Regardless, she gave me her forwarding address and phone number in Ontario and requested I call her when I was ready. I did not follow up because I believed that in-person interviews would provide me with more data derived from body language and facial expressions.

Through a longtime colleague, I was made aware of two men, both automotive restoration mechanics at the Reynold's Museum in Wetaskiwin, who were also eager to be interviewed. Both considered their work restoring vintage automobiles an art form and reported experiencing great satisfaction, joy, and pride in their work. A woman who works with immigrants was another prospect referred to me. However, although they all appeared to be good interviewing prospects, I decided not to pursue them for the purpose of this paper because they did not sufficiently fit the criteria I had established.

There is no magic formula concerning the number of participants required in phenomenological research. Rather, the researcher includes as many as are required to adequately elucidate the phenomenon (Becker, 1986; Wertz, 1984). Generally, this means more than one because "the interpreted structure obtained from one person should be found in the experience of other persons, if it has empathic generalizability" (Osborne, 1990, p. 82). I deliberately limited the number of co-researchers to three in an effort to control the amount of data, much of which was becoming repetitive in terms of themes. Although I interviewed five individuals and considered two others, I chose three as most representative and most able to articulate their experiences. Three proved sufficient to my purposes; five would have been overwhelming and redundant. I wanted to keep the number of co-researchers small because I was seeking depth of experience, not breadth.

## Data Collection: The Interviews

Obtaining experiential descriptions from others can be done through a number of methods, including interviewing, observing, biography, autobiography, protocol writing, literature, diaries and journals, phenomenological literature, and art (van Manen, 1990). However, I chose the interview as my method for obtaining data because

> [it] is the favorite methodological tool of the qualitative researcher...[it] is a conversation, the art of asking questions and listening. It is not a neutral tool, for the interviewer creates the reality of the interview situation. In this situation answers are given. Thus the interview produces situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes. (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p. 36)

My interviews with three "called" individuals provided me with substantial data. I chose the interview format as my primary method of data collection for a number of reasons. First, I am comfortable interviewing others and have considerable experience doing so. Second, I am an extrovert who enjoys people and delights in their stories. Third, face-to-face interviews allowed me to observe the body language, facial expressions, eye contact, and any nervous habits or unusual behaviours of the co-researchers. Fourth, direct interviews provided me with the opportunity to observe any hesitancies, pauses, concealments or omissions, which I could then probe further (Wertz, 1984). Fifth, rapport, empathy, and interpersonal interaction are facilitated in the interview format which "provides a human context that motivates the subject to take up the task of articulating complex, lived experiences" (Becker, 1986, p. 102). Sixth, the interview lends itself to the explication of meaning:

> The conversation has a hermeneutic thrust: it is oriented to sense-making and interpreting of the notion that drives or stimulates the conversation. It is for this reason that the collaborative quality of the conversation lends itself especially well to the task of reflecting on the themes of the notion or phenomenon under study. (Van Manen, p.98)

The goal of any phenomenological method is to enter the life-world of another. This is not as simple as it sounds; rather, this process is based on relationship. A relationship of empathic understanding and the establishment of rapport and mutual trust are qualities essential to achieving genuine descriptions of lived experience (Osborne, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1981). As an interviewer, I must somehow connect on a personal, meaningful level if I am to even begin to hope to capture the essence of others' experiences. Clandinin and Connelly (1998) understand this difficulty:

> We see personal experience methods as a way to permit researchers to enter into and participate with the social world in ways that allow the possibility of transformations and growth...Personal experience methods inevitably are relationship methods". (p. 176)

In order to maximize the comfort level of each co-researcher, I allowed them to choose the place where we would meet for the interview. Aside from needing a certain degree of privacy and an electrical outlet for the tape recorder, the only other criterion was their comfort level. I will present the circumstances under which I met each co-researcher when I provide each *overall synthesis of the experience of vocation* in Chapter Four. The interview process involved three stages, the orienting or structuring interview, the data gathering interview, and finally, the validation or corroborative interview. The following describes each phase in more detail.

### The Structuring Interview

The first interview was used to gather some very basic demographic information and to determine whether the individual indeed met the basic criteria, as outlined previously by Colaizzi (1978). In addition to asking the questions listed in Table 7, Appendix D, I described the nature of the interviewing process and the time commitments that would be involved. The most important question was: *Have you experienced a calling?* Unlike two others who were ambivalent in their responses to this critical question, the three co-researchers chosen for this study were unequivocally definitive. This was the major criterion for their selection.

I also shared some personal information regarding the reasons for my interest in the topic. In addition, I explained the confidentiality issue, the requirement of informed consent, and their right to withdraw at any time. I then asked them to choose a location where they felt comfortable to participate in the next phase of the process.

### The Data Gathering Interview

The data gathering interviews were conducted at a location chosen by each individual. After a bit of chit-chat to break the ice and put the interviewee at ease, I once again introduced the topics of confidentiality, informed consent, and interview process. I provided and reviewed in detail the following forms: the "Letter of Introduction and Study Description" and a "Consent to Participate" form (see Appendix E). The Department of Educational Policy Studies had provided ethical release for this consent form. I also reminded co-researchers of the three instances where breaking confidentiality would be necessary. They read the forms, asked questions, and signed the consent.

I explained that the interview process was fairly unstructured and that, although I did have some questions that I wanted to address, I wanted them to take the interview where they wanted it to go. In this way, I tried to avoid any leading questions that might support my biases and preconceptions of the phenomenon.

I then asked them if they would like to use a pseudonym for the purpose of confidentiality. Two of them chose to do so. I then asked for permission to begin the interview and turn on the tape recorder. I did a quick test to ensure it was in good working order and then began. I tried to follow the conversational lead of each co-researcher. However, one interviewee, who I chose not to use for the study, led the conversation into areas that did not inform my research topic. It proved very difficult to bring him back to the topic at hand. Although the conversation consumed at least ninety minutes, it was only toward the end when I was finally able to squeeze in my questions. Even then, I did not feel that I had gotten to the core of his experience.

Of the three co-researchers that I did use for my study, one was extremely forthcoming and answered most of my questions before I even asked them. The second was generally quite descriptive but needed some prompting while the third, who was initially reticent and quiet, needed more prompting and probing questions. All three, however, provided rich, thick descriptions of their experience.

Data-Gathering Questions. I had prepared questions in advance in order to provide minimal structure to the interview. See Table 2 in Appendix D for the list of data-gathering questions. I deliberately chose questions that suited the phenomenological approach, that is, experience/behaviour questions, feeling questions, and sensory questions. Because knowledge questions are better suited to evaluation research (Patton, 1990), I did not develop any. Also, I did not design opinion/value questions because I suspected that opinions and values would emerge regardless. My primary focus was on capturing the feelings and lived experience of the co-researchers.

Patton (1990) encouraged the use of open-ended questions to allow the interviewee to respond with maximum flexibility and minimal structure. Open-endedness is particularly important in promoting freedom of expression. It is important to word questions in such a way so as not to inadvertently convey one's biases or lead the interviewee in a certain direction or train of thought. I attempted to word my questions to allow for as much open-endedness as possible. I began many questions with "how", "what", and "would you describe", in an effort to allow the interviewee plenty of room for expansion. Patton suggests we avoid "why" questions because they are better suited to quantitative research where the goal is to discover cause and effect relationships among variables. In addition, they may provoke an analytical, rather than a feeling response to the descriptions of experience. I have avoided altogether the use of "why" questions. I used probing questions where appropriate throughout the interviews on occasions where further clarification or elaboration was necessary.

Each data gathering interview ranged in length from sixty-five minutes to ninety-five minutes. My primary role was to listen, encourage, empathize, be patient, and just be there. My secondary role was to ensure that core concerns about the phenomenon had been addressed. I generally found that if I attended to my primary role, the second role took care of itself. I tried, as much as possible, to let the data emerge on its own because "No one knows what will 'come out' in a conversation...a conversation has a spirit of its own" (Gadamer, 1985, p. 345). We concluded the interview when the co-researcher indicated he or she had nothing further to add and when repetition started to occur.

I was impressed by the openness and candour with which the co-researchers expressed themselves. Although a virtual stranger to all but one co-researcher, I was readily accepted by all interviewees, who willingly and even eagerly confided in me. They shared their highs and their lows and seemed unconcerned with time. I greatly appreciated their eagerness to take valuable time from their busy schedules to talk to me about what must have seemed an important topic. Otherwise, I assume they would not have bothered.

Listening and Transcribing. After each interview, I listened to the transcribed tape at least once but usually twice. "Living sound...provides a richness of expression capable of completely transforming the written word" (Bain, 1986, p. 44). For the epidemiologist who I did not include in the study, I listened to the tape three times in an attempt to discern whether or not his was a true calling. Considering the tape was more than one and a half hours long, this endeavour was no mean feat. I would listen once, talk it over with a respected colleague and convince myself he did indeed have a calling. Then, the next time I listened, I would be convinced that he did not have a calling. I wasn't sure what contributed more to my confusion, his own uncertainty about whether or not his was a calling or my own. I discussed the interview with my thesis advisor who suggested I ask for another interview but make it very succinct and directed. Still, I hesitated. My instinct told me I would get no further in elucidating the topic. Finally, I decided to pursue someone else, someone who was definite about his calling, who had no self-doubt whatsoever about its impact on his life and its meaning for him. Looking back, I have no regrets because the data I gathered was rich and thick and the co-researcher was genuine and committed.

After I had listened to the tapes, I transcribed each of them verbatim. This was a very time-consuming and frequently frustrating task. However, it was also a valuable exercise in that it allowed me to pick up on nuances, silences, repetitions, intonations, and expressions that I hadn't noticed when in the process of interviewing. Voice tone, change in pitch, sighs, choked tears, and laughter, all contribute to a greater understanding of the phenomenon as lived.

### The Corroborative or Validation Interview

The final contact with the co-researcher came in the form of the corroborative interview which "turns indeed into an interpretive conversation wherein both partners self-reflectively orient themselves to the interpersonal or collective ground that brings the significance of the phenomenological question into view" (van Manen, 1990, p. 99). In other words, its purpose is to validate with the participants the accuracy of the data.

Prior to this interview, I sent each individual a copy of his or her *overall synthesis of the experience of vocation*, with a request to read it, reflect on it, and determine whether or not it had captured their experiences. I also asked them to make notes and comments in the margins and to pay particular attention to any themes that I may have missed or that may have emerged during further reflections since the data-gathering interview. In addition, they were asked to watch for anything that suggested an experience or theme that had not, in fact, been part of their experience.

When I met each co-researcher for the collaborative interview, he or she had read the *overall synthesis of the experience* and, after some minor adjustments, agreed that it had captured their experiences of vocation. I sensed an element of eagerness to know what I had written about them. All participants noted that they had enjoyed the experience; one went so far as to say it had been therapeutic while another wanted me to do another in-depth interview to capture what had been happening in her life since the corroborative interview. The experience had proven an opportunity to reflect upon and critically evaluate the meaning of vocation in their lives.

## Data analysis

Although the goal is to allow the data to speak for themselves and the interviewer is to be "invisible", neutral, and unbiased, this is never, in reality, the case. The interviewer's voice is nonetheless heard in the selection of data and the way it will be reported (Fontana & Frey, 1998).

There is no single, correct way to analyze qualitative data. The goal of data analysis in phenomenological research is to capture what Patton (1990) refers to as the "bones" of the experience or "the essence of the phenomenon" (p. 409). The meaning or essence of a phenomenon is multi-faceted, and the researcher attempts to capture these multiple dimensions that comprise a whole. To understand how an individual experiences calling, we must first consider all the constituent parts of the experience and then synthesize them into a comprehensive whole or gestalt (Tesch, 1987). As previously mentioned, I utilized a primarily Colaizzi (1978) approach, one that is fairly structured and methodical, and wherein the thematic analyses of the data are presented in tabular form. Colaizzi reminded us that his recommended research procedures are to be viewed as flexible, overlapping, and easily modified. As such, the following steps utilized to analyze the co-researchers' data are not completely consistent with those of Colaizzi.

1. I began by organizing the data as Patton (1990) recommended: I listened to each tape several times; I transcribed the interview protocols completely and verbatim, including all relevant non-verbal information (pauses, tears, smoking, twitching); I added the necessary punctuation so as to accurately reflect the flow and meaning of the interview; and finally, I kept both an electronic and a hard copy in a safe place. I was then ready to begin the data analysis in earnest.

2. I immersed myself in the data as a whole, as recommended by Tesch (1987, p. 232), listening to the tape again in its entirety and reading the entire transcript. Then, I began "panning", a brilliant metaphor Tesch uses to describe van Manen's highlighting approach (p. 232). I followed Colaizzi's (1978) advice by "extracting significant statements" (p. 59) that seemed to capture the co-researcher's experience while avoiding meaningless repetition. For example, I considered the following excerpt to be particularly revealing of Pam's experience: "I feel lucky to have hit on it [vocation], to know what it was because I think that there are so many people...they've got a niche but they just haven't found it". I avoided the "surveying" or line-by-line approach because this would have been extremely time-consuming, and, I believe, no more elucidating.

3. I paraphrased each excerpt to ensure that I fully understood what had been stated.

4. I formulated a theme or themes to capture the meaning of each excerpt. Here, I had to rely, to an extent, on my intuition or what Colaizzi (1978) referred to as "creative insight...[wherein one] must leap from what his subjects say to what they mean" (p. 59), to capture the implicit or deep meaning rather than just the explicit or surface meaning. This is a precarious step because "while moving beyond the protocol statements, the meanings [the researcher] arrives at and formulates should never sever all connection with the original protocols" (p. 59). Thus, it is important to maintain the first order theme within its context.

Interestingly, I sometimes found it easier to arrive at the theme(s) than at the paraphrase, and occasionally found myself working backward, so to speak. Sometimes, after taking a break from this process, I would suddenly experience an insight, a revelation about a meaning or theme that had been puzzling me. Consequently, I would return to my paraphrases and themes and rework them, sometimes several times. I became aware that I was naturally applying the "spiralling" process described by Tesch (1987, p. 231). Tesch argues that three human faculties are essential to the process of theme emergence. They are holistic perception, that which leads us to "discern holistically a Gestalt" (p. 237), an order-making ability, and finally, intuition or tacit knowing. Thus, although the process produces a logical presentation of the data, the analytical process itself is anything but linear.

Finally, I was ready to place all this information, including significant excerpts, and two levels of abstraction, i.e., paraphrased or interpretive meanings, and themes, into a tabular form. This represents the first order thematic abstraction of an experience of calling. Tables 1, 3, and 5, contained in Appendices A, B, and C, contain this data for each co-researcher.

5. I then made ten copies of the first table and cut them into strips, each of which represented a first order theme. As I read each of them, I reflected on its larger meaning and grouped it with others that were similar. Core to phenomenology is the discovery of themes and metathemes (Tesch, 1987), a

paradoxical process wherein I discovered the necessity of having what Patton (1990) refers to as "a high tolerance for ambiguity" (p. 183). In this way, I attempted to capture the Gestalt of the first order themes in order to develop second order themes, themes that were more generalized and abstract. Some first-order themes were sorted into more than one second-order theme. I validated all thematic clusters by referring them back to the transcript to determine whether I had omitted any fundamental aspects of the transcript or had implied something not within the transcript (Colaizzi, 1978).

Again, this process may appear to be logical and linear but it is not. Rather, it is similar to the process Max van Manen (1984) referred to in his wonderful metaphor of discovering "knots in the web" ( p. 59). Individual themes can be thought of as one-dimensional aspects of an individual's experience. But, knotted together they form a complex, intricate web whose fibres weave in and out of each other to form a unique and multi-dimensional pattern. I soon discovered that the themes did not fit neatly into only one cluster or metatheme. Rather, there was considerable overlap between themes; some were more popular than others and were therefore placed in several clusters.

Second order themes are metathemes or clusters of first order themes. I have represented them in another table, entitled the "second order thematic abstraction". This completed the second step in the hierarchical process of data analysis. Appendices A, B, and C contain Tables 2, 4, and 6, which present the data for each co-researcher.

6. I used the second order themes to provide basic structure to the writing process involved in developing each co-researcher's *Overall Synthesis of the experience of vocation.*

7. I mailed each co-researcher a copy of his or her *overall synthesis of the experience of vocation* with a request to determine whether it was an accurate representation of experience. I would phone approximately one week later to set up another interview to discuss the description. These corroborative interviews were generally quite short, approximately twenty to thirty minutes. Any modifications or new data were discussed and incorporated into the analysis. And, in the case

where others had had a certain experience not shared by one individual, I would ask whether we had simply overlooked it or it had not, in fact, been part of their experience. This was a necessary procedure because some aspects of vocation may not have emerged during the data gathering interview. The corroborative interview is part of the triangulation process, useful in strengthening the validity of the data.

8. I compared all three of the participants' final thematic clusters to determine the shared structure of the experience, i.e., those themes that were shared by all. I incorporated these common themes into a "third order thematic table" to capture very abstract themes and to provide structure to an *Overall Synthesis of the Shared Experience of the phenomenon*. This highest level of abstraction is known as the "between persons" analysis. The purpose of the overall structural description is to reveal vocation's structural components without reference to the specific content of the participants' experience. This is the primary goal of phenomenological research.

9. Throughout the analytical process, I met regularly with my advisor, Dr. Sue Scott, and Arlene Young, a respected colleague and friend who is in the process of completing her Ph.D. dissertation in Educational Psychology. Because I hold their professional judgement in high esteem, I chose to discuss, debate, and verify emerging themes and solicit feedback on my data interpretation. Both were often able to provide insights and perspectives that I otherwise may have overlooked. This approach was yet another example of triangulation.

To conclude, the process of phenomenological data analysis is both ordered and systematic, as demonstrated by the logical building of three hierarchies of categories, but it is also creative, intuitive, and risky. By identifying, through this hierarchical process, the essential structure of each co-researcher's experience of vocation, I was better able to identify the uniqueness of each experience and compare it with others for the purpose of identifying shared structures.

In Chapter 4, I shall describe each of the participants and his or her overall synthesis of experience. The chapter ends with the overall structural description and includes an analysis of all the themes that were shared by all the participants.

# Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results of the Lived Experience of Vocation

This chapter contains the descriptions of each of the three co-researchers' experiences. Each description includes personal background information and an *overall synthesis of the co-researcher's experience of vocation*. I have deliberately used the present tense when describing the experiences in an attempt to capture the immediacy and ongoing nature of the phenomenon. There is considerable overlap among the themes and therefore some repetition within each description. The individual descriptions are presented in the order in which I conducted the interviews.

The data analyses are presented in tabular form and are incorporated as appendices. Appendix A contains the data analysis for Samantha's experience and contains Tables 1 and 2. Pam's data are presented in Tables 3 and 4 and are contained in Appendix B. Tables 5 and 6 constitute Rochester's analyses (See Appendix C). In Tables 1, 3, and 5, I have extracted relevant excerpts from each the co-researcher's transcript and have included them in the first column. The second column represents the preliminary abstraction of each excerpt, in the form of a paraphrase. The third column contains the first order themes formulated to reflect the essence of each excerpt.

In Tables 2, 4, and 6, the first order themes from Tables 1, 3, and 5, are clustered into more abstract themes. Each cluster represents a second order theme and contains, in brackets, the numbers of the first order themes which comprise it. I have used the second order themes to organize the overall synthesis of each co-researcher's experience. Because there is considerable overlap among the themes, there is necessarily some repetition within each of the following syntheses.

Following the presentation of each of the three overall syntheses of experience, is a brief delineation of the shared themes, a definition of all themes, and a final level of thematic abstraction, i.e., the generation of third order themes, which are subsequently used to present an *overall synthesis of the shared experience*. Those themes that were not experienced by all of the co-researchers, are excluded from the overall synthesis of the shared experiences. The shared structure of the phenomenon of vocation is revealed within this level of analysis. The overall synthesis is no longer situated in concrete examples but rather, provides a more generalized description of the phenomenon.

Following, in the order in which they were interviewed, are the overall syntheses of each co-researcher's experience of vocation. Let us begin, then, with Samantha.

## Samantha

### Personal Information

Samantha is 35 years old and, at the time of the interview, was a part-time graduate student in Special Education and a full-time Special Education teacher working on a contract basis. She has been working within the school system for fifteen years and has worked an additional seven years, in various capacities, with handicapped children throughout high school and university. Samantha was going through a divorce at the time of the interview but has since remarried. She has two preschool age sons from her first marriage.

Samantha and I were classmates in two graduate level courses and consequently developed a friendly relationship. When I initially approached Samantha about whether she had experienced a calling, I did so in a casual and almost flippant manner. We were in the hallway outside the classroom during a coffee break when I nonchalantly asked, "So, have you experienced a calling?" Without hesitation, she replied "Absolutely". I was dumbstruck! Who would have expected that the first person I asked would have replied in such an unequivocal manner? She immediately agreed to be interviewed.

Samantha chose to meet me at my home for the interview. We sat at the dining room table with cups of tea and began. Initially, she appeared to be rather nervous and somewhat reluctant. She expressed doubt about having anything much to offer to my research. She was initially concerned about the amount of time the process would take and admitted that she'd had second thoughts about agreeing to do this. Despite this, the interview went extremely well. In fact, Samantha needed virtually no prompting throughout the interview. She described her experience in an emergent way, answering questions before I had even asked them. I asked my questions merely to be consistent in my approach with the other co-researchers and to ensure that she had indeed included everything she had intended to. I found Samantha to be very articulate and well suited to the interview process.

See Appendix A for the data analyses of Samantha's experience of vocation. Protocol excerpts, paraphrases, and first order themes are found in Table 1. In Table 2, these first order themes are clustered into more abstract themes. Each cluster represents a second order theme and contains in brackets the numbers of the first order themes which comprise it. I have used the second order themes to organize the following description of Samantha's experience.

## Overall Synthesis of Samantha's Experience of Vocation

### Awareness of her own giftedness with people—a caretaker of children.

Samantha states, "I'd always known...that I was gifted with people, that I had a natural ability to communicate and empathize and listen to people." Even as a young child, she had a way with children younger than herself. She recalls childhood memories:

> I tended to be the neighbourhood caretaker of children younger than myself...I would always be taking care of little children throughout the day and the neighbourhood children would always call on me.

Samantha's awareness of her gift was reinforced by her mother's story of her unique birth circumstances.

### Early Awareness of Vocation—"even as a young, young child."

Samantha has "always known" that she was gifted with people and "even as a young, young child...was a caretaker...a caregiver." Her mother's story about her birth and its unique circumstances reinforced, throughout her childhood, the notion of vocation: "so I knew that I had to do something with a purpose and it was my job to find out what that purpose was."

### Strong parental support—unconditional maternal love.

Samantha has experienced her mother's support throughout her life, from the very moment of her birth when Samantha was born the seventh child of the seventh son on the seventeenth day of the seventh month, weighing seven pounds. Being very superstitious, her mother knew this was the mark of a special child, a child with a gift. Because her mother always told Samantha the story of her birth, it became a reinforcing tool that promoted and supported her giftedness. Samantha admits that, although the story may have changed over time, perhaps becoming more elaborate, the enduring and key element was her mother's unconditional support: "the look of love in her eyes was amazing because I knew I could do anything I wanted to do because she believed in me." Now, as an adult, Samantha continues to experience her mother's unconditional love and support: "she supports me in every decision I make; she may not always agree with me but she supports me."

Recognition and reinforcement from others—a truly, truly special child.

Right from birth, others recognize Samantha's uniqueness. The hospital nun who blessed all the newborns, apparently took one look at Samantha and remarked: "This child will have a special gift to give to the world; this will be a truly, truly special child." When a young child, Samantha is recognized by other children as someone they could call on and count on to take care of them. In high school, Samantha's teachers also recognize her gift and recommend from amongst her peers as someone who would be suitable for volunteer work at a developmental centre for children with special needs. Principals at the schools where she has taught may not have understood her passion for handicapped children but even the principal who compared the value of a particular child to that of a coffee cup "supported me in anything I chose to do; he was an advocate if I needed him to be." Currently, at age thirty-five, family, friends, and colleagues view her as a specialist, an expert whose opinions and judgements they value.

Congruence—"it's my life's work…it's a mission."

Samantha's experience of calling is complex, multi-faceted, intense, and pervasive in its impact on her life. When asked what impact calling had on her life, she replied,

> It is my life. So, it's a pretty huge impact. I can't imagine who I'd be if I didn't do what I did, if I didn't have this purpose, this calling...it's definitely affected who I am; it's impacted my personality and my approach with people and every action of every day.

*It is my life*--these four simple words capture the depth and breadth of the experience of calling for Samantha and reveal the congruency between who she is and what she does. Her calling has touched virtually every aspect of her life, from what she does for a living, how she looks at life, her sense of spirituality, and how she relates to others, to the decisions she makes, the goals to which she aspires, and the very shaping of her personality. Samantha's work is integral to who she is; her calling is the defining force of her life: "[it] is me." Vocation is a constant theme that permeates her entire life, lending it unity of purpose and congruence; it is "simply--my life's work...it's a mission...the purpose of all your actions."

Samantha experiences congruence between her vocation and her vision of the future. The pursuit of a Master's degree in special education has less to do with the education she's receiving than with the credibility it will give her: "I know what I'm doing but other people have to know that I know..." Although her plans aren't carved in stone, she knows that whatever she does, "whether...I write a book, ...start an organization that supports parents to train their children...[or] get some position high up where I can influence a lot of people to help transform the field of special education", it is essential to make a real difference in the lives of children with handicaps.

Samantha had a sense of "knowing" what she is meant to do from an early age: "I'd always known that I was gifted with people...even as a young, young child." This sense of "knowing" was reinforced in Grade ten when she experienced a dramatic turning point, an epiphany of sorts, when she saw the positive effects her work had on the life of a severely handicapped child. Her revelation is clear and powerful: "So, that was the moment that changed my life. The power of a five-year old child...I knew right then and there what I wanted to do." Her sense of knowing is strengthened in high school when she knows, in advance, what the results of a vocational assessment tool will be: "So, it was right on the money; so I knew what I wanted to do."

After graduating with a Bachelor of Education degree in Special Education, she initially felt confused and disillusioned but this led to contemplation and, ultimately, a still clearer, more congruent sense of her calling. She then realized that there were many ways to fulfill her calling with handicapped children and teaching was just one of many paths to the same destination. She could achieve a good fit in any number of ways, as long as she pursued her calling to work with people with disabilities. For example, while working her way through university, Samantha realizes she could have made more money doing something else "but what I chose was to stay in the field [work with the handicapped]; I knew that's where I needed to be."

Samantha experiences a congruent blending of her various roles: "I've become the local specialist...they [friends, colleagues] call me...that happens all the time...so my personal and professional life is never separated". She realizes that she would pursue her calling no matter what: "If I wasn't working in the field, I would still be working in the field, regardless of whether they paid me or not."

The acceptance by others of her work as core to who she is, reinforces Samantha's sense of congruence. Friends and family members may not want to hear the details of what she does, but they support, admire and appreciate her for who she is and what she does. Her parents are proud of her and encouraging, especially her mother. Her friends and colleagues are in awe of her and say "Wow, unbelievable...you do amazing things with these kids."

### Perceptions, beliefs, and definitions of calling—We all have a purpose.

Throughout the interview, Samantha freely provided opinions and ideas about what she believed about the concept of calling. She sometimes generalized from her own experiences to draw conclusions about all callings. For example, because she experienced others' perceptions of her as dichotomous, that is, either reverence or repulsion, she surmises that all callings spark strong, polarized reactions in others. And, because her own calling is not motivated by financial gain, she believes that

> [the] call doesn't attach itself to a paying position. A calling could be motherhood, or something to do with the community...it doesn't have to have anything to do with money.

Samantha believes that "all of us are put here for a reason...and there was a reason for everything occurring and there was a plan." She pities those who do not share her experience of vocation: "I feel sorry for people who spend their entire lives and not feel that [sense of purpose, calling]." She recognizes, through her own experience, that there are many ways to fulfill one's mission. She sees work as integral to personhood and containing a spiritual element that is soul-building.

Vocation, not occupation or job—"it's not a job; it's part of my being."

Samantha doesn't label herself within the narrow confines of job titles or occupational terms. Her definition is broad, yet simple: "...my calling is to work with people with disabilities." She is, and always has been, a caretaker, a caregiver. Although her current occupation is that of special education teacher, Samantha views her calling as something much bigger:

> I often still say that I'm...not in Special Education because I'm a teacher; I'm a teacher because I'm in Special Education. If I wasn't a teacher, I know I'd be in Special Education somewhere else...I could work with [handicapped children] in the community, in their homes and with their families. I don't necessarily have to work with them in school.

Samantha views what she does as essential to who she is: "...it's not a job to me. It's part of my soul. It's part of my being." However, as an occupation, she currently finds teaching frustrating and limiting because

> my sense is that I can only touch a certain number of children every day; it's not enough for me; I have to touch all of them. I have to physically make a difference.

She also believes that one's calling is akin to destiny or fate; it has a sense of inevitability: "So that's my belief in calling...it doesn't matter what you do, you're still going to end up doing it, right?"

Reactions of others to calling and the effects—Reverence or Repulsion.

Right from birth, others react to Samantha in primarily positive ways. The story of her birth and its notion of her giftedness encourage her immensely. Her mother's love and unconditional acceptance fuel Samantha's belief in herself. Her parents are proud of her achievements and this "gave me the courage to continue even further."

Despite initial negative reactions from her teen peers, Samantha continues the pursuit of her calling with determination, conviction, and zeal. Her peers soon learn to accept her for who she is even if they don't fully understand why she is doing what she does. She experiences the coldness and callousness of other workers' reactions to handicapped children. Rather than imitating this behaviour, she decides to reject it as unsuitable for her.

Samantha's family and friends frequently consult her because they consider her to be an expert, a specialist in her field. This reaction to her calling has a mixed effect on her. On one hand, she feels complimented but, on the other hand, she feels a deep sense of responsibility and obligation, fear of failure, and self-doubt. She worries about whether she can live up to their expectations and yet is determined to do so.

Samantha believes that some of the negative reactions of others, from teen peers to principals, is fear-based because "there's a sense of fearfulness surrounding children with disabilities, a sense of unknowing." She admits that, initially, she too experienced this fear but overcame it. The nature of her work makes others uncomfortable and fearful "and even my own family...we meet for a Sunday dinner and they don't want to talk about [my work]...so there's a bit of resistance."

Samantha feels that the reactions of others to her are divided:

> I get the sense that I've been placed on a pedestal...I get two senses--one is “why is she wasting her life helping people who can't help themselves?” and the other one is closer to sainthood; so there's a real split view on me.

However, the reactions of others, whether positive or negative, affect Samantha in positive ways. As a teen who was being teased and called names, she nevertheless persisted. Their reaction provoked a sense of defiance in her: "If you don't think I can do this, well, I'm going to show you!" Later, when dealing with a principal who compares the learning capacity of a handicapped girl to that of an inanimate object, Samantha defends her position and speaks to him with the strength of her convictions: "It's not what I can teach her; it's what she can teach me...and it's what she can teach you...about humanity." And now, when friends and colleagues are awed by her abilities, she is inspired to do even more: "...it makes me do more amazing things...it pushes me further, towards this goal that I can't even see, it's so high." Thus, the reactions of others serve to motivate, encourage, and inspire her.

### Purpose, drive, and vision—Life Mission; the purpose of all actions.

Samantha experiences her calling as her mission in life, a life purpose that provides her with a clear sense of direction. Throughout our interview, she used the words calling, mission, purpose, and meaning almost interchangeably. Her mission makes her life meaningful and keeps her focused on her goals, from volunteer work with handicapped children while a high school student, and paying her way through university by working in her field, to pursuing a Master's degree and struggling through the "rough spots" inherent in her work. It is, as she so succinctly puts it, "...a mission; a calling is a life mission; it's a direction, the purpose of all your actions."

Samantha feels driven by her calling and describes it as an inevitable, irresistible pull that provides her a sense of purpose that invariably brings her back to her "home base", that of serving handicapped children. It is not money that draws her in, for she would work for nothing and has done so in the past and continues to do so in the present when consulted by friends and associates for her professional expertise. Her intrinsic purpose motivates her to continually strive to attain new goals and improve herself; each accomplishment compels her yet further along the path to reach her ultimate goal.

Samantha has a vision of her future that entails "a goal that I can't even see, it's so high." Although she isn't yet sure how that vision will play out, whether it involves writing a book or establishing an organization, she knows she needs to make "the biggest difference."

### Service to others—the Need to "touch them all."

Samantha experiences her calling as service to others, and more specifically, service to handicapped children and their families. Samantha feels a deep sense of responsibility and obligation for those she serves. Helping others makes her life meaningful: "I could die tomorrow and know that I made a difference...and what I've done has been important to many, many people." Her achievements and contributions to others motivate her to reach more and more of them, to reach the "ultimate plateau" by making "the biggest difference." Service to others is core to

Samantha's vocation and fosters feelings of gratitude, satisfaction, power, elation, and exhilaration.

Even as a teen, Samantha chose responsible service over fun; throughout high school and university she made purposeful decisions to help handicapped children rather than pursue more lucrative, more enjoyable activities: "There was a lot of peer pressure...but for me...I was the only one who was doing anything like this...I was called anything from a pansy to a goody two-shoes." And, as an adult, she feels personally responsible for others, even those she is not paid to work with.

Samantha feels stifled in her current teaching job because it does not allow her to "touch them all." Helping handicapped children achieve things others thought impossible fills her with a sense of power, exhilaration, and deep satisfaction. However, her main concern and greatest fear is "What if I can't help them?" Her fear of failure and self-doubt are, she feels, the flip side of the coin. Responsibility, obligation, and success dovetail with worry, fear, and doubt. She feels honored by the compliment that others consider her an expert, but experiences a sense of angst about the level of trust placed in her.

### Spirituality—vocation is "Part of my Soul."

A strong theme of spirituality resonated throughout the interview, right from the beginning when Samantha describes her mother's story of her birth, to the very end when she defines just what that spirituality means to her. She describes her vocation as "not a job to me; it's part of my soul; it's part of my being."

When asked to describe her bodily sensations at the time of her earliest experience of being called, Samantha compared it to the moment of just having given birth, a moment she describes as a spiritual connection, an "overwhelming sense of being alive; that...connection with yourself and with your child and with whoever put you there." It is little wonder, then, that she describes her calling as "almost like a religion" because it provides the things that religion traditionally and presumably provided, things like hope, faith, strength, a sense of community, the value of family, and a connection with the divine.

Closely linked with the call to soul is the call to love. Samantha compares her experience of vocation with feelings one has when in love, " an overwhelming sense of elation that will carry you through all the rough things that are going to be ahead." She would work whether paid or not; by implication, she must love her work.

### Vocation as sacrifice—"I gave all that up."

Despite the euphoria she sometimes experiences, Samantha also confronts obstacles and makes sacrifices in order to pursue her calling. As a teen, she had to overcome her own initial fear of handicapped children: "I was extremely fearful...it took me experience and...time to overcome that fearfulness." Samantha sacrificed "normal" teen activities to volunteer three years' worth of lunch hours to feed handicapped children: "and when you're fifteen years old, that's a huge sacrifice, especially in high school...because my friends all hung out and had...fun; I gave all that up."

In high school, Samantha overcame peer pressure, taunting, and name-calling to fulfill her commitment to her vocation. While working her way through university, Samantha chooses summer jobs within her field despite more lucrative opportunities. Finally, as an adult, she helps family and friends with special education issues and problems, and has returned to university to earn a Master's degree while simultaneously working and raising two children as a single mother. Certainly, her actions and behaviours speak for themselves; she has proven herself ready to make sacrifices and do whatever it takes to pursue her calling.

### Passion, depth of feeling—"incredible highs."

Samantha experiences calling as passion. Although she did not use the word "passion" in our interview, I use it here to interpret the plethora of overwhelmingly strong emotions she expressed. Samantha speaks exuberantly about her feelings and uses many superlatives throughout her speech. Words like "overwhelming", "really", "biggest", and "great" erupted throughout the interview.

Samantha uses evocative comparisons to capture the intensity of her feelings. For example, she compares the feelings she experiences when working with handicapped children to those associated with being in love, emotions like elation, joy, and pride, emotions that carry one through the inevitable rough spots. She describes another peak experience, that of giving birth, to describe the feelings of vitality, connectedness, and spirituality also associated with her calling. Her contributions to others foster feelings of gratitude, exhilaration, and deep satisfaction. She experiences her calling as "an incredible high...an incredible feeling of overwhelming satisfaction and gratitude", a feeling she considers similar to an adrenaline rush, a surge of power, strength, and energy. She shares a sense of joint purpose and a sense of community with other workers and helpers. All these intense, powerful feelings serve to motivate, strengthen, and energize her, ultimately pushing her forward to achieve higher and higher goals. Samantha is nothing if not passionate.

### Peak experiences—"overwhelming sense of being alive."

Samantha's experience of calling has produced some dramatic and memorable moments. She describes intense experiences, comparable to the "overwhelming connection" one feels when giving birth, and to the feeling of being in love. When Samantha recalls an incident wherein her ongoing work with a severely handicapped child results in the child's speaking her first word ever, she describes it as a personal epiphany: "I knew right then and there what I wanted to do [with my life]." When she overcomes the odds by helping children accomplish something no-one thought they could, she experiences "Ah Hah!" moments, little "Eureka's, sudden revelations, and discoveries about who she is and what her capabilities are. Although she thinks that all teachers experience similar feelings, Samantha believes that

> those of us who work with children with special needs, who are surrounded by negativity and pessimism, when it [learning] actually occurs, the high is even greater, because you've accomplished something that nobody else thought you could.

Samantha experiences these revelations often and finds them motivating and powerful.

Samantha feels very grateful for her calling:

> There's this overwhelming sense of gratitude and I mean gratitude in the sense that I'm thankful that I've had the opportunity to be there to experience that [breakthroughs with handicapped children]...It's an incredible high...

### Continuous learning and growth—Continual Transformations.

For Samantha, vocation is an ongoing, evolutionary process that contributes significantly to her personal growth. She aptly describes it as "a process of constantly transforming into a higher level." She is continually searching for new and better ways to help handicapped children and believes that "with each child I've worked with, I've grown into a better human being." Nonetheless, she continues to feel that "whatever I'm doing is never quite good enough; and I think that's important that I'm feeling that because it pushes me forward." Samantha's commitment to her calling is demonstrated in her current pursuit of a Master's degree in Special Education.

### Negative feelings invoked by vocation and effects—"any stall is frustrating."

Samantha's experience of calling is fueled by strong emotions, most of which are positive but many which are negative. Her primary negative feeling is that of overwhelming frustration with anything that stands in the way of achieving her goals. In university, she was frustrated by the perceived irrelevancy of required courses that seemed totally unrelated to what she needed to do. She believes these feelings of frustration are exacerbated by the fact that she is so intent upon her purpose: "When you're so sure of what you want to be when you grow up, any stall is frustrating to you."

She is currently feeling at odds with her teaching job:

> I'm frustrated...because my sense is that I can only touch a certain number of children every day. It's not enough for me; I have to touch them all; I have to physically make a difference.

This sense of frustration has compelled her to go back to university for a Master's degree in the hope that this will be the "ticket" she needs to increase her knowledge and credibility and thereby accomplish still more.

She has also experienced confusion and uncertainty about how to make a difference: "I'm not even sure still at this point what that difference is going to be...but I know what I'm doing right now isn't enough." She experiences a strong sense of responsibility and obligation for those whom she serves. Although this is not necessarily a negative feeling, it does provoke a sense of doubt and fear of failure. She worries: "What if I can't help them?"

### Positive feelings invoked by vocation and their effects—overwhelmingly positive.

Samantha's feelings about her calling are predominantly positive; in fact, they are "overwhelmingly" positive. She describes emotional "highs", revelations, and epiphanies. She uses comparisons to peak experiences such as giving birth and being in love to convey the strength and depth of the feelings invoked by her calling. She gains strength from the spiritual aspects of her vocation. Samantha experiences a communal sense of joint purpose, personal closeness, and an "overwhelming sense of togetherness" with her colleagues. She expresses feelings of joy, warmth, fun, pride, exhilaration, elation, and satisfaction. She states:

> there was a sense of fulfillment that I got working with the children and I still do...when they pick up a book and read it out loud, I know they can do it because I've worked with them and I've taught them.

And, there is a deep sense of gratitude for being able to have the chance to pursue her calling because it gives her life purpose and meaning, and imbues her with strength and energy. Consequently, she pities those who do not share her experience of calling.

Samantha experiences a sense of pride, satisfaction, and accomplishment when she achieves some success, a warm bodily sensation she describes as "being puffed". She also acknowledges a sense of mastery:

> It's the *Yes, this is it; I can do this; I've created this. I've made this happen*...there's a real feeling of power when...you've accomplished something that nobody else thought you could.

All her feelings, whether positive or negative, seem to serve the same purpose, that of motivating her to do more, be more and touch more people. The negative feelings of frustration push her forward to achieve more, to defy the odds stacked against handicapped children. The positive feelings motivate and inspire her to reach ever higher goals.

## Pam

### Personal Information

Pam is a thirty-six year old veterinarian who has her own small animal practice with another woman partner. Her clinic is located in a small strip mall in Edmonton. Pam is married to a mining engineer and has two small children, aged four and one. She was born and educated in Saskatchewan and began university at the age of sixteen. She and her family live in a small community outside of Edmonton.

Pam's husband had been an outplacement client of mine. When we were chatting one day about my thesis topic, he indicated that he believed his wife had a calling. Of course, I asked him to ask her for permission to call her for the purpose of asking some preliminary questions. I subsequently called her and arranged for a meeting at her veterinary clinic where we met in a small, informal, and comfortable consultation room with a home-like atmosphere. Pam seemed comfortable in this environment.

Pam initially impressed me as soft-spoken, even-tempered, unpretentious, and unassuming. However, as I later immersed myself in the interview data and transcribed it verbatim, I was increasingly struck by the depth of her feeling and the strength of her convictions. Although evenly spoken, Pamela repeatedly used words that were powerful, evocative, and emphatic. Reading and re-reading the transcribed interview strengthened my appreciation for Pam, her calling, and the joy, commitment, and passion with which she experienced it.

Pam's demeanour during our interview was calm and even. Her voice was soft, had few inflections and didn't vary much in pitch, volume, or speed. However, on three occasions, when she was talking about her patients and their owners, I was surprised to see tears in her eyes. Nothing in her voice or statements had alerted me to the possibility of tears. It became obvious that beneath her calm exterior lay an emotional depth not immediately apparent.

Initially, Pam tended to answer questions at face value; her responses tended to be somewhat generalized. I occasionally needed to repeat questions, reword them, and probe to capture the depth of her feelings and experience. However, as the interview progressed, Pam became increasingly expressive and needed little explanation or encouragement. The data she provided was interesting, thick, and rich.

The data analyses of Pam's protocol are located in Appendix B which contains Table 3 and 4. Table 3 contains excerpts from Pam's transcript, paraphrases of each excerpt, and the first order theme of each. Table 4 presents a clustering of the first order themes into second order themes. I have used the second order themes to organize the following description of Pam's experience. Because there is considerable overlap among the themes, there is necessarily some repetition within the following synthesis.

## Overall Synthesis of Pam's Experience

### Awareness of own gifts—kinship with animals and investigative gifts.

Pam knows she has a special bond with animals; she has a special kinship with them that allows her to communicate with them at a deep level. In addition, she knows she is gifted intellectually and needs to be mentally challenged.

> I knew I wanted to use my mind. That's my biggest asset...but I wanted it to mentally challenging...It would have to be having to think your way through [problems]...from day one, I was always a reader and an investigator.

Pam enters university at the age of sixteen, thinking she's "pretty brainy stuff" and can just breeze through like before.

### Early awareness of vocation—from age of seven.

Pam "just knows", from the age of seven, that she wants to be a veterinarian. She feels a strong bond with animals as a child, "so I knew that I wanted them to be a part of my life and not just [as] pets and not just animal husbandry either."

### Strong parental support—"you can do anything."

Pam's parents provide ongoing encouragement and support and instill in her the belief that she was capable of anything: "My parents were both really, really supportive…like there was never anything you can't do. It was their attitude that you can do anything as long as you put your mind to it and try really hard." Pam recalls talks with her father that fostered the conviction that it is better to do what you love and earn less money than to do what is most lucrative and be miserable.

### Recognition and reinforcement by others—support and skepticism.

Besides her parents, teachers and peers were also supportive. Her peers were initially supportive but changed their attitude after Pamela was actually in the Veterinary Medicine program. Then, she was subjected to skepticism and some derision because her choice was not as lucrative or as prestigious as some other medical occupations: "Whoa, why don't you become a real doctor?" Nevertheless, their attitude served only to encourage her more. She describes herself as very determined, not easily discouraged and "would've gone ahead and done it anyways." She has never looked back or regretted going into veterinary medicine.

When Pam was doing poorly in her first year at university, a professor suggested she pursue animal husbandry instead. However, Pam knew that this type of contact with animals was not mentally challenging enough for her and "was totally not of interest to me." The effect of the professor's comment was to make her more motivated to pursue her calling: "it made me try a bit harder."

### Perceptions, beliefs, and definitions of calling—everyone has a "niche."

Pam believes that everyone has a vocation:

> I feel lucky to have hit on it, to know what it was because…there are so many people out there…they've got a niche but they haven't found it…but I feel lucky for me inside. For them, when they don't know what it is and…go through life…get stuck in a rut…have to pay the bills…so they don't feel they can stop.

Pam is explicit about what constitutes her vocation and what does not. She knows her vocation is healing and distinguishes this from the business owner component of her work, which she feels is definitely not part of her calling because "it's [business aspect] not an innate drive...for some people it is, but...not for me." We can infer then, by implication, that she believes innate qualities are integral to vocation.

### Congruence—"floating in a cloud of happiness."

Pam's life resonates with congruency. Her intellectual gifts and deep bond with animals dovetail with the challenges provided by her vocation. Her family, work, and social lives tend to spill over into each other. She develops long-lasting friendships with her clients and colleagues. She describes it as a "really big impact in terms of just the kind of people [kind-hearted people] I find myself involved with" and "Oh, the people I've met are wonderful people. I've met tons and tons of wonderful people." Pam's calling has had a gargantuan effect on her life. Her joy and delight in animals are evident when she fondly and humourously recounts various animal adventure stories from her youth.

From the age of seven, she experiences a "knowing" of what she is meant to be. This ribbon of "knowing" guides her through her school, university and work life and continues to weave its way through her life. It provides her with determination, a clear direction and a strong focus. She knows what she wants and pursues it with confidence, conviction and steadfastness. Her strong sense of purpose motivates her to overcome negative comments and persist in jumping the required "hoops" while at university. Nothing and no-one is able to discourage her from her goal.

Pam's certitude means that she has no difficulty selecting the right courses in high school. However, later on, in university, this same strong focus and sense of congruency are frustrated when she must take courses she feels are not taking her quickly enough to where she needs to go. After graduating, Pam works at a small animal practice and discovers "that was when I really, truly knew that I'd totally made the right choice because I just loved it." Pam experiences a solid "fit" between her gifts and the challenges of her work insofar as she is able to use her intellectual and problem-solving abilities to help animals and their owners.

The impact of calling on Pam's life is pervasive:

> ...following my calling means that I'm very happy in what I do and so that has a huge effect...it makes me healthier...it makes my marriage easier...because I love it.

There is congruence among all the aspects of her life, including her marriage, her family, her relationships with colleagues, clients and friends, her health, her happiness, her level of fulfillment, her aspirations for the future, and, of course, her daily work life. Everything seems to flow from one source, her sense of vocation, and the person she is able to be when pursuing it. The pieces of her life fit snugly together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. She is at peace with who she is and what she does; she experiences a sense of overall comfort, contentment, and happiness described as "just kind of float[ing] along in this little cloud of happiness."

### Vocation is self-defined—Healer: "I save lives."

Pam thinks of her vocation in broad, encompassing terms:

> I love what I do; anything I did would be...healing related...that's my biggest calling...healing. My calling has changed to encompass more...it moved from just being with animals to healing animals to now, to healing, period. It's broadened.

Pam does not limit herself to job titles or occupational terms; rather, the title of her vocation is simple but profound: She is a healer, period. This definition serves as a central theme that runs through her life, whether practicing traditional medicine while employed by someone else or practicing holistic medicine while in private practice. Pam has a vision of her vocation broadening even further in the future, perhaps expanding to healing people as well. What she does is "save lives...I save lives and I save and prolong life and that's the good thing." She will continue to be a healer, in one form or another, even after she leaves her veterinary practice. For Pam, vocation is a life theme, one that will endure for as long as she lives.

### Reactions of others to calling and effects—overwhelmingly positive.

Others' reactions to Pam's calling have been largely positive in nature. Whether others' reactions were positive or negative, the effects on Pam have been overwhelmingly positive. Others' disparaging remarks only serve to intensify her drive and sense of purpose. She experiences her calling as a clear purpose, a strong drive, and a heightened determination that sets her apart from other children who had aspired to be veterinarians. Her clear direction assists her in making all the right academic choices throughout high school and later, in university. She is so intent on her goal that she experiences frustration and disappointment with courses that seem irrelevant. However, she persists and is accepted into the College of Veterinary Medicine. Even there, she again experiences initial frustration because, although closer to her goal, she is still not getting enough of the actual practice with animals nor hands-on medical or surgical practice. Again, she persists and graduates.

### Purpose, drive, and vision—"No regrets."

Pam's sense of purpose goes beyond monetary gain or prestigious status symbols. She is well aware that she could earn more money and status as a doctor or dentist and "that's fine." She is true to her calling: she loves, helps, and heals animals and their owners. Her sense of purpose has evolved over time; she views her mission as healing. She is a healer who "saves lives" and is continually striving to improve the lot of her patients and their owners and who searches for new ways to expand her range of services to include both western and eastern techniques and philosophies.

Pam knows that she could have gone into human medicine, where she would have earned more money and had more prestige but she has "never regretted going into veterinary medicine...no regrets, oh no." She sees herself eventually expanding her horizons from healing animals to also healing people. She is paradoxically both excited and comforted to offer alternative medicines that allow more client involvement, less invasive techniques and create a more calming and comforting environment. Her purpose is to offer the best of both western and eastern approaches to help her patients on their road to health.

Pam consider her vocation a lifelong venture. Even after she closes her veterinary practice: "I anticipate being a healer forever." She would like to teach healing to animal Health Technology students at NAIT and, later, venture even further into alternative medicines and expand into the treatment of humans as well.

### Service to others—"with and for the patient, rather than to the patient."

Pam experiences being of service to others as "a help to the animal, help to their owner and a help to me…and I could go through the day because I had done a good job." She feels a strong connection with the animals and their owners and is keenly aware of the strong bonds that exist between them; she is concerned about their welfare and feels responsible to provide them with the best services. She finds helping animals and people very rewarding and fulfilling.

Pam is "other-directed" and spends her afternoons educating the owners to help them feel more capable and involved. She thrives on educating herself as well and has moved into the use of non-traditional techniques and therapies which she provides in order to give clients more choice and to promote an atmosphere that is more homey and comfortable. Not only is she able to provide important services that prolong and save lives, she also loves being able to use her investigative and intellectual gifts to solve diagnostic problems.

Pam loves to help others and feels a lot of pleasure and excitement at being able to prolong and save lives. She feels love for both animals and their owners. Practicing acupuncture has enhanced the pleasure she gets from helping and serving others. She feels more motherly and nurturing when able to do more with and for the patient, rather than to the patient.

Passion, depth of feeling—Nurturing and Motherly.

Pam's enthusiasm and passion are as strong now as when she began: "Oh, this is wonderful; I love this; this is it for me!" She feels "pumped" when learning new skills that allow her to save more lives and is eager to learn more. Pam's foray into non-traditional medical practice has provided even greater satisfaction in her work "if that's possible." It allows her to provide a more comfortable, comforting and homey environment, involve clients in the treatment process, and offer a broader range of service options. She describes her new holistic service in this way:

> And so it gives me a lot of pleasure to do things to get these guys [animals] off the drugs…that is exciting but it's also a calming thing;…that doesn't make sense, but it makes me very comfortable with what I do and what I can offer to my clients.

She feels more loving, connected and nurturing, to both the animals and their owners, when practicing non-traditional medicine and is excited and amazed by the wonderful results her treatment provides:

> you should see the animals that come in for the alternative stuff! The animals that used to tremble and quake…now come in and they're happy. It makes me feel really good.

This nurturing is not limited to her animal patients but rather, "towards clients too; it's really bizarre. We get a closeness with the client...[who] feels more involved." Pam communicates to animals, primarily through touch, her intent to heal. The bond she feels is very deep, akin to how a mother would feel towards her baby.

Pam expresses the depth of her emotions through the use of powerful, evocative, and emphatic words. She employed words such as "wonderful, gratifying, amazing, incredible, love, totally, satisfaction, rewarding, attachment, connection, positive, exciting, and lucky", to describe her experience of calling. She also emphasized feelings through the use of repetition: "really, really", "saving lives…I save lives…and that's a form of saving…gratifying to save their life."

### Health and well-being—happy, healthy, balanced, contented.

Because Pam loves what she does and knows that

> following my calling means that I'm very happy in what I do and so that has a huge effect because it makes me healthier...it makes my marriage easier because I'm not going home with a pile of stress that I'm unloading on anybody.

The contentment and happiness she feels at work overflows into all other aspects of her life to "feed and sustain [her]." Her recent foray into alternative medicine has fostered a new, calmer, more nurturing approach to her work, one that "is a healthy thing; it promotes a nice, healthy hormonal balance; it brings out all the right seritonin levels in your body." Life balance contributes to her health; she chooses to work a reasonable amount of time so she can enjoy her family and pursue social activities such as ballroom dancing. She knows that the pursuit of work for the sake of money only leads to misery and disease. Calmness, contentment, happiness, and peace are the results of pursuing work she loves.

### Continuous learning and growth—from western to holistic medicine.

Pam's love and passion for her work result in enthusiasm for new learning scenarios. She loves any kind of continuing education (C.E.) because

> you always get pumped; it doesn't matter what C.E. you do, you come back in and you are hyped up to try all these new and cool things...and you are going to save even more patients;...it's exciting.

Although Pam is as passionate now as ever before and still loves western medicine, she is steadily moving into holistic approaches such as acupuncture and chiropractic. Since this shift, she has discovered a new, more nurturing side of herself that allows her to connect on an even deeper level to communicate, through loving touch, her intent to heal and help.

Initially, Pam was intuitively drawn to veterinary medicine but didn't really know why other than "it would be a nifty thing to do." Now, having worked in the field, she knows what it involves and knows she loves it. This love for her work and the loving connection she feels with her clientele motivate her to continue to learn and grow. In fact, her experience of calling has grown "to encompass more…from just being with animals, to healing animals, to now, to healing, period."

Negative feelings invoked by vocation and effects—Euthanasia is painful.

Pam has generally experienced very few and relatively minor negative feelings as a result of her calling, feelings that nevertheless reaped good effects insofar as they motivated her to succeed. When first attending university, she experiences frustration at having to jump "hoops' by taking seemingly irrelevant courses. Because she was so focused on her ultimate goal, she realizes that her "focus was wrong...[she] didn't want to be there [in pre-veterinary medicine]...I wanted to be in veterinarian medicine." Later, when in the College of Veterinarian Medicine, she feels disillusionment and disappointment in the classes because they do not allow for enough hands-on practice. Her eagerness to be where she feels she needs to be is a source of frustration for her.

Her peers' initial support turns to skepticism and derision when she is actually in the College: "Whoa, why don't you be a real doctor?" Although not sufficient to deter her, Pam is mildly irritated by their admonitions. Currently, Pam experiences her euthanasia cases as very difficult and draining and states, with tears in her eyes, "I can barely leave a euthanasia [case] dry-eyed anymore. and I go back and cry after they've gone...it surprises me a little. I thought I'd be a little hardened to it but no, no."

In some social situations, Pam occasionally gets mildly annoyed when people find out she's a veterinarian and then want to "talk animals" all evening. This helps her recognize her need for balance.

### Positive feelings invoked by vocation and effects—"Deeply touched."

Pam's experience with vocation is abundantly and overwhelmingly positive. She speaks in superlatives about her work, repeatedly using words such as love, happy, healthy, comfortable, gratifying, exciting, satisfying, and rewarding, among others. The passion she feels for her vocation comes across clearly in the stories she tells about the her experiences with animals. For example, she is "really, really deeply" touched when she able to comfort a sick animal. Her stories bespeak her empathy for both the animals and their owners: "when I touch them [animals], they can feel...my intent and I can feel their worry and there's a...transfer of emotions." Healing gives her warm physical sensations in the chest. Because she can dialogue with clients, she find she doesn't need to "go [as] deeply to do [my] communicating." Pam came to tears three times when describing the depth of her attachments. And, even though she finds euthanasia very draining, she knows there is a silver lining, that "it's often a kindness."

Pam clearly loves virtually all aspects of her work, from strong peer and client relationships, to the intellectual challenges and growth opportunities it provides, and the freedom to choose a balanced and suitable lifestyle that accommodates her life as a whole. Clients become long-term friends, some of whom still write to her and visit even though they've moved away. She experiences a spillover between her work and social life: "I make more friends because of what I do."

Pam feels empathy for those who have not yet found their niche and feels "lucky to have hit on it, to know what it was…" She appreciates her vocation and the opportunities it brings because she knows that "lots of people hate what they do but I love coming to work." Increasingly, since her movement into holistic medicine, she experiences a strong nurturing feeling that promotes a comforting and "homey" atmosphere in her clinic. This mothering feeling has enriched her life and her practice, increasing her sense of peace, contentment, and comfort.

Other positive feelings include a strong sense of conviction that this is right for her, a "knowing" that she is a healer, and a strong sense of purpose. Her calling has positive impacts on all other aspects of her life, providing balance, promoting health and happiness, reducing stress and improving marriage and family life as well.

## Rochester

### Personal Information

I discovered my third co-researcher in a circuitous manner. A neighbour had suggested that Ted, a musician she knew, seemed to have a calling. Ted worked in a creative field, played in the Edmonton Symphony, and also played in a band on weekends. I did a preliminary interview with Ted over the phone, one that lasted approximately forty-five minutes. The more we talked, the more convinced he became that he did not qualify as having experienced a calling. Although he described his music as a very important part of his life, it was not integral to who he was. In fact, for a period of six or seven years, while in university and afterward, Ted did not play music at all. This fact was, for me, a strong indicator that he did not, indeed, meet the major criterion necessary for participation in my research.

Fortunately, being well-connected in the music community, Ted was able to recommend two other individuals who he felt truly had a vocation for music. He gave me their names and numbers and gave me permission to use his name as the means with which to introduce myself. One was a concert pianist with a Ph.D. in music while the other a talented young musician with no formal education in music. I chose to call the latter, Rochester.

Rochester is twenty-six years old and lives common-law with his girlfriend. He has no children. He has a grade 12 education and no formal training in music. He describes his vocation as *artist*, a term he uses to encompass all facets of his multi-disciplined calling that includes musician, songwriter, music producer, technician, among others. Although he doesn't own a car, a fact which seems unusual for a young man, Rochester does have a recording studio in his small apartment where he has produced approximately twenty bands' albums and several of his own. He has signed on with a record company and is striving to succeed in the highly competitive music industry. In addition to his work as a sales representative for musical equipment at a small music store near where he lives, Rochester teaches music therapy classes to substance abuse users.

When I phoned Rochester to discuss the research project, I posed my first and most important question: *Have you experienced a calling to a vocation?* His response was unequivocally positive: "definitely, absolutely." These words were music to my ears. We agreed to meet at a small cafe, close to where he lives. The cafe where we met was "artsy", rather dirty, very relaxed, and full of interesting looking people. We ordered some coffee and sat down at a table in an empty adjoining room where the music would not interfere with the recording of the interview. Rochester seemed a bit nervous and smoked a cigarette. He blew the smoke away from me until I told him it was fine to just smoke. Even though I don't smoke, I wanted him to feel comfortable and at ease.

Rochester struck me as being down-to-earth, totally unpretentious, and genuine. His choice of pseudonym was humourously out of character. I thoroughly enjoyed our interview which lasted approximately eighty minutes. Although he insisted that he was "just horrible at interviews", he provided a wealth of interesting, rich, and thought-provoking information about his experience of calling.

The data analysis of Rochester's protocol is presented in Appendix C which includes Tables 5 and 6. Table 5 includes relevant interview excerpts, paraphrases and first order themes. Table 6 presents a clustering of the first order themes into second order themes. I have used the second order themes to organize the following description of Rochester's experience. Because there is considerable overlap among the themes, there is necessarily some repetition within the following synthesis.

## Overall Synthesis of Rochester's Experience of Vocation

### Awareness of own giftedness--Music is "who I am."

Rochester considers his talent for music as "being just so natural...it's who I am." He can play virtually any musical instruments he picks up. Although he never learned to read notes and has never taken music lessons, Rochester has always had a strong and natural affinity for music. Because music is so natural to him, he sometimes tends to take his gift for granted, "where [it's]...looked at like it's nothing." Even the process of writing songs comes naturally. He describes the creative process as one where "I grab [ideas] out of the air...you just pick up this one bit of energy and elaborate on that...so it comes to my head but it's not coming out of my head." Rochester believes he has a gift but tends to downplay its significance: "but your gift is equal, like even idiot savants..."

### Early awareness of vocation—"It was always rock star."

Rochester has very early recollections of his affinity for music. As a very young child, he would study his parents' music collection and "before I could remember words, or say anything except 'Mom' and 'Dad', I was listing off [names of] records." He remembers as a young child often falling asleep during his father's band rehearsals: "it was great...right inside of [bass drum set]...it was crazy." Rochester can't remember ever wanting to be anything other than a musician. His mother kept a book of all his report cards, photos, and recorded what he wanted to be each year. Each year "it was always rock star...[although] a few years I put fireman or policeman just to be normal." His first conscious memory of knowing music was for him was in grade two: "I started forming my own bands out of my friends...I'd have all the instruments and...pretend we were the Beatles...and I'd teach them to play and try to get somewhere." By grade four, he was writing and performing his own songs: "it felt cool because it sounded good...it would give me a sense that it could go somewhere."

### Strong parental support—Emotional and financial.

Rochester's parents have always been and continue to be supportive of his calling. They provided him with musical instruments and his father taught him some songs and would sometimes participate in his grade school performances. Even though his parents couldn't really afford to, they have supported him financially by investing in his bands. Their lack of pressure to attend university is perceived by Rochester as support of what he really wants to do. Their support motivates him to succeed: "it would be letting myself down but [I'd] also hate to see things [financial support] going to waste."

### Recognition and reinforcement of gifts by others—Artistic freedom.

Rochester experienced support from teachers, particularly music teachers who gave him "artistic freedom [from] stringent and rigid types of music...[and] some liberation for being able to play what I wanted to." His friends have always been supportive and have liked being included and involved in his music. They attend his performances and their encouragement is much appreciated by Rochester. In addition, the Alberta Foundation for the Arts has given him numerous factor grants which, although they are not always enough, are much appreciated.

### Perceptions, beliefs, and definitions of vocation—"Everyone's got a Calling."

Rochester believes that "everyone's got a calling but they've never tackled it or they don't realize it." Until four years ago, Rochester didn't realize that his music was indeed a calling. The realization that "I can't stop doing this", was a "huge step" for him. He believes everyone has equal gifts.

### Congruence—"If it [vocation] wasn't there, I'd be somebody else."

Unlike other children who changed their occupational goals every year, Rochester can't remember ever wanting to be anything other than a musician. Rochester's vocation is core to who he is and being an artist is integral to his personality: "if it wasn't there, I'd be somebody else." Nor does he believe that he is the product of a musical environment: "even if my father hadn't been a musician, I would still be who I am [artist]". Because his calling is "so natural...[and] it's who I am", he experiences congruence among all aspects of his life. Music pervades his entire existence and is not relegated to a paid position. Virtually everything he does, from paid jobs to recreational activities, revolves around music. It is so pervasive in his life that "I don't know anything outside of music." Music is essential to his well-being and mental health, and is a form of therapy that helps him cope with daily problems and "keeps me alive."

Rochester's calling is core to who he is and music is his primary method of communicating. He repeatedly mentions his perceived inability to express himself through ordinary language: "sometimes I can't even speak" and "it's really horrible...I can't communicate sometimes because of it." Paradoxically, despite feeling limited by speech, he is able to communicate through the more complex media of poetry, lyrics, and music. These are the realms in which he feels most comfortable. The creative process itself is, for him, quite natural: "I just make up stories...I grab them out of the air." He claims he can't read very well yet he is able to "sit and write two pages [of what would be written in book form] in one line [of poetry]", a process he describes as both more difficult and yet simpler than writing a book.

Even Rochester's recreational activities revolve around music. Any books he reads and movies he watches pertain to music and musicians, all of which he uses to "learn more about where a lot of people went wrong and where they went right...and to use that to my benefit." Even television is limited to watching The Simpsons program and this too is accompanied by his playing of the guitar. All his plans for the future entail music:

> I've definitely got a vision or a plan of where I'm going to be for every ten years, what I'll be doing, what instruments I'll be playing, what I'll be doing in the whole industry.

Rochester's calling is lifelong:

> I just figure I'll be doing it forever...I visualize when I'm in a retirement home, I'll have my buddies that I'll play with and we'll do performances with my banjo...Hee Haa!

When he looks out into audiences and sees people sing along with his songs, he realizes that "this is something I could do forever; and when you realize that you could do it forever, you can't not do it forever." Music is his purpose in life and there is nothing that could sway him from that purpose.

### Vocation, not occupation—Artist, Purveyor of Emotion and Thought.

Rochester defines his calling in very broad, inclusive terms. He prefers not to separate artist from musician and therefore calls himself "just an artist, straightforward…[a term that] when you look at everything you've got to do to survive…" seems more appropriate. As an artist, he identifies most strongly with song-writing and the production of his own and other artists' music. He likes performing but finds it less exciting than the creative process. He believes that "anyone can be a good musician but to be a purveyor of emotion and thought and to actually succeed at it…you realize that this is something [you] could do forever." Purveying emotion and thought through song-writing is a challenging process despite the seemingly natural way that ideas come to him. The complexity arises from the need to "make everything so concise…to really word yourself properly [and] write two pages in one line…it's tough." However, writing evocative lyrics is essential but not sufficient to the creative process. Rochester finds that he needs to be a skilled technician who is "manipulating [equipment] to create the desired effect…[and] tweaking knobs to get…the right emotion to convey." Being an artist is a complex role that allows him to connect with others by "speaking for those who cannot speak and …[those] who have no-one to listen to them." By telling others' stories, he is able to ease their pain and loneliness and validate their feelings.

In addition to songwriting, performing, and producing music, Rochester also does posters and album art work, display merchandising, advertising design, and acting. Being an actor means "you hit the stage and you have to be a completely different person than you are…depressed or not, you've got to be 'up'." And finally, as a teacher of music therapy, Rochester uses music to help heal people who are addicted to alcohol and drugs. For him too, music serves a therapeutic role, one that is essential to staying alive.

### Reactions of others to vocation and effects—Overcoming stereotypes.

Others' reactions have a huge emotional impact on Rochester because he is so vested in what he does:

> it's been good and it's been heartbreaking…as much as it's a good thing, it's a horrible thing…[the] personal torment of being an artist…the stuff you have to go through…can be really painful but…it can be really elating.

Still, Rochester recognizes that "you really feed off the bad as much as you do the good" and even the negative reactions of others sometimes have positive effects insofar as "you write a better song when you're sad or depressed."

Positive reactions from others who identify with his music result in good feelings for Rochester. He is happy when he can alleviate the isolation of others who think "I'm not alone anymore…I'm not crazy…this is a lot like me…this [emotion] is common." When he "look[s] out into the audience and sees people singing along with your song…you realize that this is something I could do forever." Thus, the positive reactions of others motivate him to continue to touch people through his music.

School teachers were supportive of Rochester, particularly music teachers who allowed him "some liberation to…play what I wanted to." His friends have always been supportive and continue to be so. When a child, Rochester would get his friends together to form bands and teach them how to play. His friends liked being involved and currently encourage him by attending his performances. He appreciates their support and recognizes that "encouragement is encouragement so it has a good effect on you."

Rochester experiences negative stereotyping from band bookers, club owners, and the police who mostly label all musicians as drug addicts and alcoholics. Although their reactions are frustrating, the effect on Rochester is positive insofar as it "totally motivated me to live past the stereotype…so they'd stop doing that…try to make a change."

The reactions of audiences can be disconcerting for Rochester. Especially since the decline in live entertainment and the move to dance clubs, live music is less appreciated. Rochester has played in front of audiences who have never even seen a live band and don't know how to react: "they don't [even] clap." Initially this reaction would "really bring me down" but he has been somewhat able to "push it aside." Going for auditions at record companies and being turned down is very discouraging because "you've spilled your blood, sweat, and tears and…you can't help but take it personally." Other times, when the reaction is positive and he lands a publishing deal, the effect is "elating."

The lack of money for bands since the nineties has had a negative effect on Rochester. He feels he is "cutting your own throat…[while] breaking [your] back" and compromising himself by accepting less than he feels he deserves as an artist. The lack of unions and limited government support of the arts have dire financial circumstances:

> it's really hard to survive—unless you totally dump everything but then it's feast or famine; one month you're living the high life and the next, you're not.

Rochester is appreciative of the factor grants provided by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts because it allows him to be more creative, "to make it even more grand than your vision."

The reactions of his common-law wife have both positive and negative effects on Rochester. On one hand, his calling elicits her jealousy, both of other women who see him performing, and of his relationship with his music. As a result, he has experienced some conflict and has stopped writing love songs because he wanted to avoid friction. Conversely, he recognizes the benefits of her reaction because "it moved me to look at other things besides relationships as the motives for songs." Consequently, just as her reaction has "dulled [his music]…it's actually elevated it."

### Purpose, drive, and vision—"Nothing to sway me from my purpose."

Rochester's calling is his purpose in life. His purpose as a song writer, a "purveyor of emotion and thought", increases his drive to be successful and fuels his vision of music as a lifelong pursuit. He states: "there's nothing else in my life that would make me think I was something other than what that [music] is…to sway me from my purpose." He is so intent upon his purpose that "it's too big…it's like who I am and I don't really see any other way than what it is…there is no other aspect for me to compare it to." Rochester's purpose is to help others by expressing and validating their emotions and by telling their stories through the media of lyrics and music. For Rochester, the creative process provides him with a clarity of purpose, a feeling of being invincible: "like nothing is going to stop you."

As a producer, Rochester's purpose is to help other bands to succeed because "I could be getting this out to the whole world…this is good for somebody else [other musicians]." He uses music as a communication tool that helps him achieve the purpose of connecting with and improving the lives of others. It is a way for him "to be a part of somebody else."

Rochester's purpose in life remains consistent. From a very young age, he knew he wanted to be a musician. When he started writing his own music in grade four, his sense of hope and purpose increased and provided incentive to continue. Nothing can stop him from his purpose, not even lucrative jobs which he foregoes because they wouldn't allow him sufficient time to "do what I really want to do." Rochester is driven to pursue his chosen path, despite feeling that he will never truly arrive because "there's something over there as well that you've got to get to." He is so passionate about his calling that even his recreational time is spent purposefully for the object of continuously learning more about his passion; any books, movies and TV programs pertain to music and the lives of musicians.

Rochester's calling provides him with a clear vision of "where I'm going to be for every ten years" and what he wants to achieve in his life. He plans to spend the next decade "bringing out the best" in other bands by producing their work. Because he knows that performing is "a young man's game", he will likely only continue it into his thirties and perhaps his forties. Twenty years hence, Rochester hopes to be "a songwriter who licenses songs to other artists…or a producer." He believes he will always be an artist and will still be playing music even when living in a retirement home. Rochester believes that he can manifest whatever he chooses; this belief increases his determination and drive to succeed.

Rochester's vision for the future includes leaving behind a legacy: "this song writing, it'll be there forever, it's not just a moment that's just passed; so there's some immortality to it." The realization four years ago that being an artist was his calling was a "huge realizing" that motivates him to keep on forever.

### Service to others—"speaking for those who cannot speak."

Even as a very young child, Rochester would imagine performing in front of others to "bring that kind of joy to others." He views music as a way to help others by giving voice to their stories, by validating their feelings, and by easing their loneliness, "by speaking for those who cannot speak…and for people who have nobody to listen to them." He feels good when he is able to alleviate the suffering of others. As well, he contributes to the other artists by producing their work:

> Just getting it [music] out into the air or getting it onto tape…it feels fantastic. Yeah, 'cause you go "This is good for somebody else." They're [other musicians] are succeeding at it and I could be getting this out to the entire world. Who knows? It might make a difference in somebody's life.

Initially, Rochester wrote songs that only he could understand. Now, however, he realizes that "I need to write something that everyone can understand, a universal idea…the simplest of emotions." This is the legacy he hopes to leave behind, that is, universal truths captured in his lyrics.

Finally, by teaching music therapy classes, Rochester uses the healing power of music to help heal those recovering from drug and alcohol dependencies.

### Spirituality—Healing power of music.

Rochester believes that his music is spiritual "in the sense that it can cure or heal." He is careful, however, to differentiate between spirituality and religion or dogma. Certain sound vibrations cause a strong physical reaction, akin to having his heart stop.

### Vocation as sacrifice.

Rochester believes that he has made sacrifices for his calling. For example, he was supported by his girlfriend for two years, a situation to which he never wants to return. He has foregone lucrative job opportunities but recognizes that "to me, money's not …very important." Although he could be earning enough money to buy a house, he chooses not to because it would take too much time away from what he really wants to do.

### Passion, depth of feelings—Elation and heartbreak.

Rochester is passionate about his calling; it implicates him personally and provokes deep feelings ranging from elation to devastation. He pours his 'blood, sweat, and tears" into his music and therefore takes others' reactions to it very personally. He recognizes that it elicits both strong positive and strong negative emotions. He says that "emotionally, it has a huge impact on me, either for adverse or for benefit." His calling sends him through "all the emotions", giving him "emotional workouts" and makes him feel acutely alive.

His positive feelings include both the giving and receiving of joy, elation, deep satisfaction, and a sense of accomplishment "like a definite egotistical thing, like 'I'm a genius' or 'I'm good'…where I'm really…very proud." When he gets an idea for a song, where "it was just a synapse kind of thing and there it is", he experiences an "enlightened confidence booster." He feels a sense of power, comparable to what he thinks great guitar players must feel when they've accomplished something musically. This sense of power is self-validating and confirming, "so I can look up to myself."

Rochester feels love and passion for his music, and uses the analogy of a lover to describe his relationship with music when he states "even if I said [to common-law wife], like 'I'll give up music for you', I'd still be like moonlighting, cheating on her." He experiences a sense of obsession and compulsion: "I can't stop doing this…and when you realize that you could do it forever, you can't not do it forever." Other positive feelings include a sense of invincibility, happiness, clarity, catharsis, drive, commitment, validation and the potential for immortality. Negative feelings include self-doubt, "like I've done something bad", personal torment, pain, fear of success, fear of failure, and heartbreak. Rochester is anything but neutral about his calling.

### Peak experiences—"walking on the moon."

Rochester describes the experience of composing music as akin to

> walking on the moon...you breathe out a sigh...you've got this sense that nothing going to stop you; you've got this really proud, confident feeling and…you feel much more clear; there's nothing, there's no stresses; it's a breath of fresh air to finally get that [song] out of you.

For him, the creative process of "just getting it [song] out into the air or getting it on to tape...feels fantastic." It invokes feelings of invincibility, elation, and peace.

When Rochester describes the healing power of music, he is referring not so much to the lyrics but rather to the emotions invoked by particular sounds or notes. Certain notes on his guitar knock the wind out of him and make him feel as though his heart has stopped.

### Health and well-being—"It keeps me alive."

Rochester's vocation is essential to his mental health and well-being. He states:

> I know that if I wasn't doing it [music]...I would probably be crazy for sure...it just helps me deal with a lot of problems...so, it's therapeutic and without it, I don't know how I'd be able to cope with day to day...finances and concerns of the world...so it keeps me alive and so that's pretty huge.

For Rochester, music gives him "emotional workouts" and is "like cheap therapy." The creative process is elating, clarifying, and a method of stress reduction. The healing power of music contains a spiritual element.

### Continuous learning and growth—"A path…something over there."

Rochester is virtually self-educated. His love of and passion for music have motivated him to learn whatever it is he needs to know about the music industry. He states:

> being a musician, you have to learn so much about the business, so every facet of the music industry...like, I produce records and engineer bands with my studio...and I used to work in [various different situations]...just to understand what all has to go on to make this work, all the facets.

Rochester believes that "there's no real destination to music or any art form...it's always just a path...you reach a destination but there's something over there as well that you've got to get to." His vocation is an ongoing path of discovery, a process of continually moving toward his lifelong vision. He builds the skills necessary to showcase and project his gifts and move forward in pursuing his dreams.

Rochester recognizes that his vocation allows him to learn more about himself insofar as he is learning more about how to relate to others to others through his music, by "realizing that I need to write something that is for people, something that everyone can understand, a universal idea...the simplest of emotions." As well, he is becoming increasingly more comfortable with who he is and "I definitely put less stress on trying to be something I either shouldn't be...like this brilliant poet [Leonard Cohen] rather than just being somebody who's relatable."

Rochester's early songs serve as a "good documentation of where you were at that time and then you look back on it and see how far you've grown." Even his spare time is committed to learning more, through books, television, and movies, "about where a lot of [musicians] went wrong and where they went right...and to use that to my benefit."

### Negative feelings invoked by vocation and effects—"Nagging doubt."

Rochester's early recollections of performing music are associated with nervousness, stomach aches, and dreams. He believes that "with anybody who's creative, you've got that fine line of constantly being doubtful...there's always that nagging doubt." Aside from self-doubt, he also experiences frustration, a self-destructive fear of success, and the fear of too much introspection because "that can be a little dangerous."

Because Rochester's calling is so integral to who he is, music is his primary method of communication and this sometimes gets in the way of expressing himself through ordinary speech: "I can't communicate because of it." Throughout the interview, he repeatedly made statements about his perceived inability to communicate.

Poor treatment from and negative stereotyping by band bookers, club owners, and police harbour feelings of anger and frustration in Rochester, feelings which ultimately motivate him to overcome what is normally expected of him. The reactions of audiences who have never seen a live band are sometimes negative and cause him grief. He feels pressured to succeed and "sometimes I don't want to succeed...it's self-destructive." He experiences jealousy of others' music, heartbreak, personal torment, and pain. He resents having to accept less than he feels he warrants as an artist and feels nervous about having to pay back government grants.

Rochester's common-law wife is jealous of his exposure, as an entertainer, to other women, and of his relationship with music. Her jealousy limits his artistic freedom because he avoids writing love songs over which she may become jealous. However, this restriction has actually "elevated" his songwriting by forcing him to write less conventional, atypical "boy meets girl" songs.

### Positive feelings invoked by vocation and effects—"It's given me everything."

Rochester experiences mostly positive feelings as a result of his calling. He recognizes that "it's given me everything" and "it keeps me alive." His calling gives him joy, elation, satisfaction, inspiration, hope, great pride, confidence, catharsis, hope, clarity, invincibility, enlightenment, power, validation, motivation to succeed, purpose, vision, and opportunities to grow and learn, all of which have hugely positive effects on his life. His calling is therapeutic, helping him cope with daily problems, "so that's a pretty huge impact." Even his negative feelings tend to affect him positively.

## Shared Experience

In total, eighteen second order themes emerged from the analysis of the experiences of the three co-researchers. Following is a list of all eighteen themes and a generalized description of each theme. Their numbers correspond with those cited in Tables 1 to 6, in Appendices A, B, and C.

1. Awareness of own gifts - knowing that one has special attributes, characteristics, and abilities
2. Early awareness of vocation - knowing, from a young age, that one is drawn to a particular vocation
3. Strong parental support - assistance, support, and encouragement from parents
4. Recognition and reinforcement from others - recognition by others of one's gifts and reinforcement of one's vocation
5. Co-researcher's perceptions, beliefs, and definitions of vocation - the ideas and notions held by the co-researcher about the concept of vocation
6. Congruence - the sense of "fit" experienced between who one is and what one does; sense of integration between one's personality and one's vocation
7. Vocation is self-defined - the explication of one vocation and its' personal meaning; the definition of vocation on one's own terms
8. Reactions of others to co-researcher's vocation and their effects on co-researcher - others react in both positive and negative ways to the co-researcher's experience; others' reactions have positive and/or negative effects on the co-researcher
9. Purpose, drive, and vision - the sense of knowing that one has a reason for living and a vision of what one is supposed to do or become
10. Service to others - orientation to helping others in a way that enriches or improves their lives
11. Spirituality - a sense of connection with something bigger than oneself
12. Vocation as sacrifice - the willingness to make sacrifices for one's vocation
13. Passion, depth of feeling - the sense of being truly alive, of feeling deeply and intensely
14. Health and well-being - feelings of mental, physical, and/or emotional health

15. Peak experiences - experiences wherein the co-researcher feels more integrated, unified, whole; heightened sense of awareness
16. Continuous learning and growth - the desire and commitment to learn and grow in one's vocation by developing the necessary skills, knowledge, experience, and education, through either informal or formal methods
17. Negative feelings and their effects - the experience of negative feelings associated with one's vocation and the effects of these feelings on the co-researcher
18. Positive feelings and their effects - the experience of positive feelings associated with one's vocation and the effects of these feelings on the co-researcher

These generalized descriptions are utilized in the "between persons" analysis or overall synthesis of the shared experience. Themes that were not shared by all three co-researchers included: vocation as sacrifice (12); health and well-being (14); and peak experiences (15). The theme of vocation as sacrifice was not found in Pam's experience of vocation whereas it was experienced by both Samantha and Rochester. The theme of health and well-being was common to both Pam and Rochester but did not emerge in Samantha's experience. Finally, the theme of peak experiences was shared by Samantha and Rochester but not experienced by Pam. It should be noted that a fourth theme, spirituality, was present in all co-researchers' experience of vocation but was weaker in Rochester's experience.

The fifteen themes shared by all co-researchers, are further clustered to generate the final level of abstraction, that is, third order themes. These third order themes represent another way of examining the essential structure of the experience of the phenomenon. The third order themes include (1) congruence, (2) vocation as life theme, (3) vocation as intimate relationship, (4) the reflected self, and (5) other-directedness. The first third order theme, *congruence*, is comprised of three second order themes, awareness of own gifts (1); early awareness of vocation (2); and congruence (6). The second third-order theme, *vocation as life theme*, consists of the following four second order themes: co-researcher's perceptions, beliefs, and definitions of vocation (5); vocation, not occupation or job (7); purpose, drive, and vision (9); and continuous learning and growth (16). Third order theme, *vocation as intimate relationship*, constitutes second order themes 13, 17, and 18. These are passion, depth of feeling (13); negative feelings invoked by vocation and effects on co-researcher (17); and positive feelings invoked by vocation and effects on co-researcher (18). Third order theme, *the reflected self*, is made up of three second order themes: strong parental support (3); recognition and reinforcement from others (4); and reactions of others to co-researcher's vocation and their effects on co-researcher (8). The last third order theme, *other-directedness*, is comprised of two second order themes, service to others (10); and spirituality (11).

These third order themes have been used to organize the following overall synthesis of the experience of vocation as shared by all the co-researchers. The following description is deliberately void of any reference to the individuals involved in the study because it is intended to identify and describe only the essential structures of the shared experience of vocation.

## Overall Synthesis of Shared Experience

### Congruence

The theme of congruence is very strong in the experience of vocation. Individuals with a vocation experience a very high degree of congruence, a solid sense of "fit" between who they are and what they do. There is a sense of integration between one's personality and one's vocation. Put simply, what one does is integral to who one is; one's vocation is core to who one is; it is essential to personhood. Vocation is experienced as a pervasive and life-organizing principle, the awareness of which begins at an early age, although it is not necessarily consciously acknowledged until the teen or young adult stage. Those with vocation experience an early awareness of their gifts and have a sense of "knowing" that these gifts are to be used and cultivated. There tends to be a blurring of boundaries between one's professional, personal, and social lives.

### Vocation as life theme

Closely related to the theme of congruence is the theme of vocation as a life theme. One's sense of congruence is consistent with one's past and present and is projected into one's entire future. The co-researchers experience vocation as a life theme that runs through their entire existence and provides them with a strong sense of purpose, a vision of their futures, and the commitment and drive necessary to achieve their goals. They define it on their own terms and label it in a broad and general way, as a life theme, rather than classifying it within strict, narrow occupational classifications or job titles. They identify much more strongly with this self-assigned definition than with any current positions they may hold. They believe that everyone has a vocation but not everyone has found it as yet and they feel fortunate to have discovered their own.

Those with vocation are inspired to continuously learn, grow, expand and evolve as human beings. They naturally seek out learning opportunities that enrich their growth. They experience vocation as an endless journey of discovery and an intrinsic driving force that motivates their actions and behaviours of every day. It provides them with a vision, a picture of what their future will look like, a picture that is consistent with who they are, that uses the gifts they have to offer, and benefits others. Their purpose is intrinsically driven and not motivated by money. Individuals with vocation deliberately choose less lucrative options in order to pursue their dreams.

### Vocation as Intimate Relationship

Those with vocation experience an intimate relationship with it. Vocation is essential to their very existence. This relationship invokes deep, powerful feelings, both positive and negative, and enriches and deepens their lives. Those with this special relationship are not creatures of mediocrity; rather, they lead rich emotional lives and behave in ways that are consistent with their passionate feelings and life purpose. This is a meaningful relationship, one that endures and persists throughout life. It is not merely a fleeting romance but a powerful marriage, a lifelong union of reciprocity and care.

Although vocation as relationship invokes primarily positive feelings, it also has the ability to result in negative feelings. Positive feelings include love, passion, joy, elation, deep satisfaction, accomplishment, excitement, peace, happiness, inspiration, hope, pride, personal power, validation, enlightenment, confidence, balance, motivation, contentment, and a sense of purpose. Those with vocation experience negative feelings in varying degrees and ranging from disappointment, irritation, and frustration with anything that gets in the way of their goals, to fear of failure, fear of success, self-doubt, heartbreak, rejection, personal torment and pain. Whether the feelings invoked by vocation are positive or negative, they invariably tend to have positive effects on the person with vocation.

## The Reflected Self

Those with vocation experience a reflection of who they are in the way they are seen and treated by others. Their parents play a key role in recognizing and encouraging them and the development of their gifts. Parental acceptance and encouragement are of the co-researchers as people, of who they are, regardless of what they do. Their support may take several forms, including emotional support, physical participation, and financial assistance. Early memories of parental support abound, whether that be the purchase of musical instruments or the provision of unconditional love and acceptance. Parents play a critical role in supporting and reflecting back to the child that which the child inherently is.

Of secondary importance to parental support is recognition and reinforcement from others. Those with vocation experience recognition of their gifts and generally positive support and reinforcement from teachers, peer groups, colleagues, significant others, and society in general. This promotes confidence and high levels of motivation. However, even when the reinforcement is negative, the effects on those with vocation tend to be positive in nature. They react with conviction, stubborn determination and even defiance in the face of negativity, doubt, derision, or opposition.

## Other-directedness

Persons with vocation are other-directed, experiencing a need to be of service to others. They want and need to make a difference in the lives of others, through helping them in one way or another. They employ their gifts in the service of others, for the betterment of others. Implicated in this other-directedness is the notion of care or love and a sense of spirituality, a connection with others and someone or something greater than oneself.

In Chapter 5, I will discuss the research findings in the context of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. In addition, I will consider the implications of the findings for future research and counseling practice with individuals struggling with life direction issues.

# Chapter 5: Research Discussion: Vocation Lives!

## Introduction

It was acknowledged in Chapter 2 that the world is rapidly changing. How do we consolidate the notion of vocation within an economy where so much of work is wrong, meaningless, frivolous, or environmentally hazardous (Roszak, 1979; Miller-Tiedeman, 1989; Hardy, 1990). Considering the bleak and difficult challenges presented by those in the adult educational foundational literature (Collins, 1991; Welton, 1998; Grace, 1998), it is initially very difficult to envision a place for the old-fashioned notion of vocation within the horrors of the global capitalistic, consumeristic, individualistic, technicist, specialistic, rationalistic, and mechanistic contexts that are largely hostile to its existence. Mergers of international companies are commonplace; downsizing is a household word; and job security has gone the way of the dinosaur. We see the consequences of the new marketplace everywhere: in the listlessness and uncertainty of youth, the disenfranchisement of the working poor, and the malaise and discontent of the middle class. We hear daily reports of work-related health problems, the increasing frequency of stress leaves, the mounting costs of benefit programs, work and family role conflict, divorces, and a multitude of family and societal problems. Surely, Fox (1994), Moore (1992) and Roszak (1979) were right when they argued that the work place had lost its ability to engender soul in its workers.

While some call for new work paradigms (Natale and Naher, 1997; Bridges, 1994), others, like Osipow (1990) are calling for greater convergence among career development theories, as a solution to current problems. Still others, (Lindeman, 1961; Collins, 1991; Welton, 1998) are urging a return to the ancient notion of vocation as the means to restore sanity. But does the notion of vocation really have a chance against the fierce gales of globalization and the greed of multinationals? Is it possible to attain the lofty ideals typically associated with vocation, characteristics like spirituality, other-directedness, giftedness, and passion? Apparently, yes. As the experiences of the co-researchers attest, all is not lost; there is hope. The co-researchers are living proof that it is still possible to attend to the call. The richness of their lives sends a strong message to all of us, as individuals, as workers, and as helping professional, about the compelling urgency to promote and pursue vocation instead of the whims of a fickle marketplace. Their experiences offer hope, potential, and possibility.

As previously mentioned in Chapter 1, the purpose of my study is to achieve four goals: (1) to explicate the themes common to the subjective experience of vocation; (2) to frame the notion of vocation in an interdisciplinary framework; (3) compare the relevant literature to the actual experience of vocation; and (4) discuss the implications of the findings for research and counselling practice. I have accomplished the first two goals and now present this final chapter in an attempt to complete the final two steps.

I was deeply moved by my interactions with the three co-researchers as we explored their feelings and perceptions. They restored my faith in the tremendous talent, versatility, and depth of human nature. I was impressed with their openness, honesty, and willingness to reveal so much of themselves to a virtual stranger. Vocation is alive and well.

## Contributions of the Research

First, most research on vocation to date has been largely limited to religious callings or the vocations of famous or extraordinary individuals. The experience of vocation has been explicated through the examination of the lives of people such as Judy Garland and Eleanor Roosevelt (Hillman, 1996; Cochran, 1990). This study, however, assumes a different stance for the study of vocation, that is, the experience of vocation as lived by "ordinary" people pursuing secular vocations. The phenomenological method has not been applied to this type of research prior to this study. This is a new and necessary perspective.

Second, this study provides a broad, multi-disciplinary perspective. The fields of career development, psychology, and adult educational foundational literature all contribute to the notion of vocation, each within the constraints of their perspectives. Career development theory is largely influenced by economic need, sociopolitical perspectives, and national development plans and processes. Psychology provides a largely intrapsychic and intrapersonal perspective whereas the adult educational foundational literature views vocation within a social action perspective that calls for critical reflection (Collins, 1991; Lindeman, 1961). It is the latter discipline's call for personal responsibility to critically reflect on one's work, judgements, and practice, that contributes a powerful dimension to the concept of vocation. Critical reflection is a preliminary step to the discernment of appropriate care and action. Finally, it has been demonstrated how the first three disciplines benefit from the insights provided by a fourth category, the eclectic mix of literature that I have called "vocational" literature which provides an historical perspective and addresses both traditional and modern notions of vocation. The perspectives provided by each discipline allow for a unique way to pursue the study of vocation and allow for comparisons among them.

Third, this research provides readers with the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of vocation in their own lives. Hopefully, the thematic analysis and overall syntheses of the co-researchers' experiences will allow readers to experience, if only vicariously, the experience of vocation. And, for those readers who have a calling, this study should strike a resonating chord of identification within them.

Fourth, career practitioners, psychologists, adult educators, and virtually anyone in any helping profession, are provided an opportunity to reflect upon their own vocations, re-examine their presumptions about job, occupation, career, and vocation; and reconsider their approaches and practices with the people they help.

Fifth, although the experience of vocation as lived by "ordinary" people is strikingly similar to the characteristics of vocation as lived by "extraordinary" people, and as explicated in the literature, I have identified two second-order themes that are either not strongly identified or are inconsistently represented in the literature. They are strong parental support, and early awareness of vocation.

Sixth, this research questions the rationale for merging the concepts of career and vocation, when it has been so clearly demonstrated that they come from completely different paradigms and serve starkly different purposes.

Seventh, this research calls for a return to the original meanings of the terms career and vocation.

Eighth, vocation appears to defy the usual classification systems so typically associated with jobs and occupations. Because vocation is self-defined and is a much broader concept than is occupation or career, it is virtually impossible to categorize. This resistance to categorization provides both more challenge to and potentially greater rewards for both vocational practitioners and their clients.

## Reflection on the Literature

As discussed earlier in this paper, a multi-disciplinary approach was taken to examining the notion of vocation. It was demonstrated that the notion of vocation has a long and rich history, one that has scarcely been acknowledged in the last century. In this chapter, the results of this research study are discussed with reference to the literature presented in Chapter 2. As described at the end of Chapter 4, the fifteen second order themes have been clustered into five third order themes which are congruence; vocation as life theme; vocation as intimate relationship; the reflected self; and other-directedness. Where a shared theme has significant differing intensities or dimensions, these will be discussed. In addition, those themes that were shared by two of the three co-researchers will be discussed only briefly. Let us begin with the first, and perhaps most important characteristic of vocation, that of congruence.

### Congruence

The co-researchers' experience of vocation as an integrative theme of congruence is strongly supported by the "vocational" literature (Cochran, 1990, Roszak, 1979; Bogart, 1994; Homan, 1986; Hillman, 1996) and the psychology literature. Work and self are one. Maslow's (1968) "full identity" is essential to self-actualization, or "fulfillment of mission" (p. 25). Frankl's (1962) notion of self-transcendence, and Jung's (1934) concept of genuine personality, require congruence between person and purpose, identity and vocation. All the co-researchers have achieved a strong sense of identify, comparable with Erikson's (1963) fifth development stage.

Interestingly, the notion of congruence is virtually non-existent in the career development literature, despite the fact that many of its theories are founded on psychological theories. Traditional career development theories tend to focus on parts of the personality, rather than the whole person, and on methodical, rational, and sequential career planning processes (Holland, 1973; Roe, 1956). As such, career is not necessary to congruence and, in fact, may be detrimental to its achievement.

Although contemporary career development models (Peavy, 1996, Gelatt, 1989) are moving toward more holistic approaches that hint at the existence of vocation, the notion of congruence is not a major focus. And, while the adult education foundational literature strongly addresses the notion of vocation, it too fails to directly address the theme of congruence, focusing instead on vocation within the larger social, cultural and political contexts.

All three co-researchers experienced a profound sense of congruence, a solid self-concept, and excellent fit between what they do and who they are. Person and work are united. As Rochester so succinctly stated: "if it [vocation as artist] wasn't there, I'd be somebody else." For Rochester, vocation is such an integral part of who he is that music is his primary method of communicating, so much so that he feels he can't communicate normally because of it. For Samantha, vocation is core to who she is: "I can't imagine who I'd be if I didn't do what I did...it's impacted my personality and my approach with people and every action of every day." Being congruent means being able to quickly discern that which is incongruent in one's life. Rather than staying in a "poor fit" situation, those with vocation know what is important to them and change either their situation or their attitude towards it in order to re-establish congruence. For example, Samantha knows that teaching is not enough for her; she needs to make an even more substantial difference in the lives of the handicapped. Earning a Master's degree is her way of reclaiming that essential sense of congruence.

Other aspects of congruence include a strong awareness of one's gifts and an early sense of vocation. All the co-researchers had, from a young age, a definite idea about who they were, what their gifts were, and a clear notion of what they were meant to become. Imagine the satisfaction and joy in knowing your purpose in life before starting school! Although the co-researchers may not have articulated their vocation at such a tender age, they recognized later that vocation was indeed what it was. For example, Rochester knew he had a gift for music and can play, without the benefit of lessons, virtually any musical instrument; he remembers always wanting to be a rock star. Samantha has always been a caregiver, "even as a young, young child". Pam has fond early memories of feeling a strong bond with animals and has never wanted to be anything other than a veterinarian. How, I have wondered, can a seven year old child really know what is involved in veterinary medicine? And yet, even as a sixteen year old at university, when the rest of us were flipping faculties like they were pancakes, Pam knew exactly what it was she wanted. Whereas Bogart's (1994) own experience of vocation did not arrive until much later in life, and those described by Hillman (1996) and Cochran (1990) are not consistently discovered at an early age, this experience of early awareness of vocation is shared in this study by all the co-researchers.

Within the adult education foundational literature, Lindeman (1961) is virtually the only one to address the importance of gifts in relation to vocation. Core to the word "gift" is the notion of giving. Just as gifts are given to us, inherent in who we are at the moment of birth, so too we give our gifts back to the world when we make use of them. Or, as Maslow (1968) believed, talents become needs because they must be used. By using our gifts, we are fulfilling our needs, and by giving gifts back, we fulfill the needs of the world, thereby benefiting both giver and receiver (Roszak, 1979; Bolles, 1991). All the co-researchers experienced the reciprocity of their gifts; they experienced joy when bringing joy, health when healing, care when giving care, wisdom when teaching, and strength when supporting others.

The career development literature focuses primarily on the development of the skills necessary to feed a hungry economy and a fickle marketplace. The economically driven message inherent in Parson's (1909) rudimentary matching system remains alive and well even today. For example, Jarvis (1995) stresses the need for career planning assistance for people of all ages, not just the traditional youth target. Although this seems an honourable recommendation for public policy, his rationale is strictly economic and political, and as such, is typical of the field of career development. The development of people resources for the purpose of fulfilling economic and political needs seems manipulative, and probably, not particularly effective. Developing the "right" skill set may be essential to career development but has nothing to do with vocation. Jarvis' message is problematic because it is industry driven rather that intrinsically driven. When skills are divorced from gifts, the sense of vocation is defeated.

The co-researchers' experience, the psychology and "vocational" literatures, and Lindeman (1961) support the wisdom inherent in developing one's gifts, from which skills develop in a natural and emergent way. The co-researchers are naturally drawn to developing those skills which serve and enhance their gifts and they experience considerable frustration with anything unrelated to their gifts and goals. For those with vocation, gifts precede skills; for those with career, skills and credentials are paramount and may have little or nothing to do with gifts or vocation. Skills detached from gifts are void of soul. For example, one can be a highly competent and technically skilled musician while never achieving the status of a gifted musician. As Rochester stated, "anyone can be a good musician" but to be a "purveyor of emotion and thought" is something quite different: that is the realm of vocation. It is skill that serves the gift that matters to vocation, not skill that serves a fickle and mercenary master. A skill born of a gift is a skill conceived in commitment, passion, love, and joy. Therein lies the difference. An undeveloped gift is a human tragedy; an undeveloped skill is not.

All three co-researchers experience a congruent blending of their personal, social, and professional roles. For example, Samantha's advice and guidance are sought outside her work circles because others consider her "the local [special education] specialist." Rochester's calling pervades his entire life; virtually everything he does revolves around his music. Pam too experiences a strong sense of fit among all aspects of her life, from her family and marital life, her relationships with colleagues and friends, to her professional aspirations and level of fulfillment. She experiences a positive spillover from her professional to her personal life:

> I've met tons and tons of wonderful people. The other vets and technical staff are really kind-hearted people...just the kind of people that are drawn to the profession...and you make friends with clients. So it's had a really big impact

> in terms of…the kind of people I find myself involved with; it's an ongoing relationship. Where the crossover comes is I've made social relationships as a result…it's…a bonus. I make more friends because of what I do.

Hence, the pieces of the co-researchers' lives seem to dovetail as snugly as the joints on a well-made piece of furniture. Their lives are not fragmented or disjointed. Rather, all parts seem to flow into and from one another.

This same strong sense of congruence can cause difficulties at times. Both Samantha and Pam experience considerable frustration at having to "jump hoops" while at university when taking courses they deemed irrelevant. Samantha believes that "when you're so sure of what you want...any stall is frustrating." This feeling is similar to Yehudi Menuhin's frustration (in Hillman, 1996) when given toy musical instruments as a child. Just as Menuhin knew he needed real musical instruments, so too the co-researchers experienced a sense of immediacy and urgency to pursue their vision of what they were meant to do.

### Vocation as Life theme

Closely linked to a sense of congruence is vocation experienced as a lifelong theme. One with vocation experiences congruence throughout one's lifetime. For all the co-researchers, vocation is a life theme, one with roots embedded in inherent gifts and early childhood memories. For them, it has always existed, is vitally alive in the present and is projected onto the future. For example, Pam states:

> I anticipate being a healer forever, whether with animals or doing acupuncture or reflexology [on people]…out of my home. I can see myself teaching [healing to students in] the Animal Health Technology program at NAIT…I see myself retiring from this particular clinic but never from the whole practice of healing.

Rochester too says he will never retire; to do so would be to retire from himself, from who he is. One may change one's job or occupation; one may retire from a career but, as the experience of the co-researchers suggests, one cannot quit or retire from a vocation; nor does one want to. Vocation as a life theme is the thread that runs through one's whole life, giving it unity and purpose. Samantha describes her calling as "a drive; it drives you through your entire existence…you're not satisfied until you reach that next plateau, until I've touched as many people as I can touch." As such, vocation is the very foundation of one's life, the undergirding foundation upon which a congruent, purposeful life is built. This foundation does not disappear the moment one loses a job or when an occupation becomes redundant due to new technology. Rather, it continues to support and sustain the structure (person) that stands upon it; it endures throughout one's life and is the unifying glue that makes all of one's life stick.

The "vocational" literature is largely supportive of the notion of vocation as life theme (Cochran, 1990; Hillman, 1996; Lindeman, 1961). Vocation, being core to who one is, does not change in essence over time. While it may manifest itself in various ways throughout a lifetime, it remains true to the constant theme. For example, Pam is a healer whether practicing western medicine or eastern medicine on animals; she will remain a healer, even after retirement from her clinic. Rochester will always be an artist and Samantha will always be a caregiver.

There is another important distinction to be made between the notion of career and that of vocation. "Lifelong" does *not* equate to life theme. Although the traditional career development literature addresses the lifelong notion of career, it is largely presented as a sequential list of the many jobs, occupations, and volunteer activities one pursues, and roles one plays throughout one's life. Although career may last a lifetime, it does not necessarily constitute a life theme. According to Super (1976), we all have a career; however, we do not all necessarily have a vocation. My career may well last a lifetime but it may lack the unity and congruence inherent in vocation. My career may be disjointed, unfulfilling, and of no consequence to others.

The traditional career development literature teaches us to expect to have four to five different occupations and more than twenty jobs in a lifetime. It is not because most people actually want to disrupt their lives by spending time and money to acquire the skill sets required by each new occupation. Rather, they do so because the marketplace requires it. The notion that we must re-invent ourselves with each new occupation is detrimental to achieving vocation because it promotes fragmentation and constant upheaval. This message is a dangerous one because it lowers our expectations. If we do not believe vocation is attainable, we are less likely to achieve it.

Granted, the individual with vocation, like the individual with a career, may also have more than one occupation and hold a number of jobs throughout their lifetime. However, for those with vocation, these occupations and jobs tend to share an intertwining and common thread that weaves them together into a coherent and meaningful whole. The tie that binds is the theme of a lifelong vocation. For example, Rochester has worked in a number of job situations, all of which relate to some aspect of the music industry and which he uses to educate himself to pursue his vocation. He currently teaches music therapy, sells music equipment, plays in a band, and produces recordings. All of these activities are merely variations of a continuous theme. The same is true for Samantha and Pam. Samantha is a caregiver, an advocate of handicapped children, whether as a high school student volunteering her lunch hours to feed them, or as an adult, teaching special education in the school system. Pam is and always will be a healer. As these co-researchers prove, our jobs, occupations, and careers do not necessarily define us, but our vocations do.

Increasingly, the contemporary theorists (Gelatt, 1991; Peavy, 1996; Bissonnette, 1995; Hansen; 1997; Miller-Tiedeman, 1989) are moving in the direction of vocation but do not go far enough. For example, Hansen's Integrative Life Planning (ILP) is a vast improvement over traditional, rationalistic models. However, Hansen incorporates, as second and fifth tasks, characteristics closely aligned with vocation, that is, *weaving our lives into a meaningful whole* and *exploring spirituality and life purpose.* Unfortunately, she considers these tasks to be of secondary importance to critical task number one, *finding work that needs doing in changing global contexts.* Putting this task first is akin to putting the cart before the horse. Fitting oneself into a huge and ever changing marketplace is a daunting task under any circumstances, one that is made even more difficult if one has not accomplished the fifth critical task, *exploring spirituality and life purpose.* It is this type of mentality that provokes the question about whether the field of career development is truly moving toward the notion of vocation or is still adhering to its fundamental focus, that is, the fulfillment of economic and political objectives. The latter would appear to be true.

All the co-researchers hold pre-conceived beliefs about the notion of vocation. They believe that vocation has nothing to do with money; if one is fortunate, one may earn one's livelihood from one's vocation but all would pursue their vocation whether paid or not. Samantha, having experienced a polarized view of herself within her vocation, from reverence to repulsion, believes everyone with a calling shares this "split view" experience, a perspective that was not shared by Rochester and Pam. However, they all believe that everyone has a vocation, regardless of their intellectual level or the size and number of their gifts. Unlike the co-researchers, Cochran (1990) and Homan (1986) do not believe that everyone has a vocation. Apparently, some people lack the courage to transcend limitations and accept responsibility for themselves and others, and therefore do not arrive at authentic existence.

Perhaps the belief that one is called to a special purpose is essential to experiencing one. To borrow a common poster slogan, *miracles happen to those who believe in them*. Perhaps that is why so seemingly few of us do experience vocation--we do not believe in it or expect it. After all, the notion of vocation is in direct opposition to what we are taught about the nature of careers and our need to find one within a chaotic marketplace. Gelatt (1989) recognizes that it is increasingly impossible to plan within the framework of constant change and therefore urges us to create life because life tends to be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The co-researchers believe that there is an inevitability inherent in vocation. As Samantha states, "it doesn't matter what you do, you're still going to end up doing it, right?" They know that one's vocation is bigger than one's job or occupation and believe that everyone has gifts. They feel fortunate, even blessed, to have a vocation. Samantha expresses her feeling of good fortune:

> There's this overwhelming sense of gratitude;...if...we have the opportunity to experience that purpose, we should be thankful. I'm very thankful; and I feel sorry for people who spend their entire lives and not feel that because I could die tomorrow and know that I made a difference.

Another sub-theme within the third order theme, vocation as life theme, is *Vocation, not occupation or job.* All the co-researchers define vocation in their own terms and label it in a broad and general way. Rather than using a narrow occupational classification or job title to define what they do, all used an umbrella term that better captured how they viewed themselves. Rochester called himself an "artist, straight forward", a "purveyor of emotion and thought", rather than a musician. These terms go beyond typical occupational or job classifications. For him, artist encompasses everything "you've got to do to survive…so I think everything is covered within that term [artist]…all that has to go on to make this work, all the facets." His job selling music equipment is a way for him to learn the retail end of the music business, network with other musicians and producers, and pay the rent. It is related to his vocation but it does not define him in the meaningful way that the broader definition of vocation does.

Pam too prefers to describe what she does and who she is in very broad terms. She prefers the term, healer, to veterinarian. She recognizes that it is the healing component of veterinary medicine that is her calling, not the business component of running a private practice. She envisions herself as always being a healer, whether of animals or people. Samantha is currently a special education teacher but indicates that this is not her vocation. Teaching is just one of a myriad of occupations that would allow her to reach and serve those with special needs. She defines her vocation in very broad terms, as caregiver, caretaker, and advocate for handicapped children and their families: "it's not a job to me...it's part of my being." She, too, knows that her vocation may take on numerous roles, such as writing a book or forming associations, but ultimately all her roles must serve her vocation and its goals.

The terms, healer, purveyor of emotion and thought, and caregiver, will not be found neatly categorized within the more than twenty thousand occupational titles found in the National Occupational Classification system. Nor will their job duties include what Rochester does, i.e., "speaking for those who cannot speak…and for people who have nobody to listen to them" or Samantha's goal of "transforming the field of special education." Unlike occupations and jobs, it is virtually impossible to categorize vocations.

Just as the co-researchers define their vocations and its parameters, so too they all recognize that their vocations define them. Thus, vocation is both self-defined and "self", defined. As Samantha explains,

> It's made an impact on my personality, on my outlook on life, on my sense of security with my own family, with my children…it's created a sense of strength in me…So it's definitely affected who I am.

For Rochester, music is so natural that "it's who I am." This kind of self-definition and strong sense of identity are consistent with the psychology and "vocational" literatures.

All three co-researchers strongly connect their vocation with their purpose in life. It is their reason for being. Samantha views it as a "life mission...the purpose of all your actions" whereas Rochester believes "there's nothing else in my life that would...sway me from my purpose." Their lives are purposeful, on purpose, and empowering. Purpose serves to motivate, inspire and drive them to achieve a grander vision, "like nothing is going to stop you." Samantha is driven to make "the biggest difference" by achieving a goal so high, she "can't even see [it]." The co-researchers are motivated and inspired by their purpose; they feel compelled and driven to their "home base." There is a sense of inevitability, an irresistible pull towards one's vocation. The "vocational" literature resonates with the notions of purpose, drive and vision whereas the career development literature, with its focus and reliance on rational decision making processes, does not.

All the co-researchers work for intrinsic purposes; pursuing their vocations has meant forgoing more lucrative and more prestigious work. Monetary gain is not the goal for those with vocation. As Rochester says "But to me, money's not…very important…as much as it is to everyone else." And Pam has "no regrets" about not becoming a medical doctor, despite the higher social status and larger income it would provide.

The co-researchers all have a vision of the future, a vision directly related to their purpose in life. For example, Rochester hopes to leave a legacy, by writing and producing his own songs or those of other musicians because "there's some immortality to that." He has a plan for every ten years and envisions himself still playing music, even when in a retirement home. Samantha has a vision of "touching all of them [handicapped children]" and transforming the field of special education. Pam's vision as a healer involves moving increasingly into alternative medicines for both people and animals. For all, their purpose involves "making a difference" in the lives of others.

All the co-researchers are intrinsically motivated to acquire the skills necessary to building upon their gifts. Pam and Samantha, while experiencing considerable frustration, persisted in jumping the necessary educational hoops while at university. Rochester is virtually self-educated and has put himself into all types of situations in order to better understand "all the facets" of the music industry. Although he has never taken a music lesson, he has demonstrated his purpose, drive, and vision, not only by learning to play virtually any musical instrument, but by learning the creative, business, technical, and merchandising components of the music industry. Not only do the co-researchers learn what they need to learn in order to pursue their vocation but their vocation also teaches them. For example, Rochester states: "I'm learning more and more about how to relate" by connecting with others through his lyrics and music. Samantha feels she has learned and grown with each child she has helped. She knows that the handicapped child has much to teach her and others about humanity. Pam gets "pumped" and excited whenever she takes another continuing education class because she can't wait to "come back in and save even more patients." Her foray into non-traditional medicine represents major personal growth, is intrinsically motivated and springs from her desire to provide a comfortable and comforting environment for her patients. This intrinsic desire to learn and grow within one's vocation is similar to what Lindeman (1961) called "education for life", and is not the kind of learning treadmill currently being used by industries as a billy stick with which to beat employees into submission by forcing them to take industry-driven courses.

Vocation as Intimate relationship

The "vocational" literature (Cochran, 1990; Jones, 1996; Moore, 1992; Jenkinson, 1991) suggests that those with vocation experience a broad range of strong emotions, from comfort, joy, love, and energy to enthusiasm, passion, and vitality. Although this was borne out in the experiences of the co-researchers, there appears, however, to be a difference in degree of intensity.

Vocation is not just about evocative feelings. It is about relationship. The relationships the co-researchers have with their vocations are not merely casual in nature. Rather, these are intense, lifelong, and intimate relationships. Although all three co-researchers use intimate relationship as an analogy for how they experience vocation, Pam and Samantha portray images of the deepest, most powerful, most intimate and most enduring relationship of all, the mother-child relationship. When Pam heals animals, particularly with alternative medical practices, she feels a very deep bond, one that evokes a physical response, a warm feeling in her chest. She responds to her patients in the way their mothers would: "Let's say a cat who's just delivered [kittens], and they just feel crummy…you just take a damp face cloth and you just wipe them down like a mother cat licking them and they just [calm down]." Pam communicates with animals on a very deep level, without the benefit of speech, just as a mother would with a child, primarily through touch: "when I touch them, they can feel...my intent and I can feel their worry and there's a transfer of emotions." She feels nurturing and "motherly", not just towards her animal patients but "towards clients too; it's really bizarre." She recognizes that, because she can use dialogue with people, she doesn't need "to go [as] deeply to do [her] communicating." After euthanizing animals, even when she knows it is ultimately a kindness, she still goes to another room and cries. This depth of emotion surprises her: "I thought I'd get a little hardened to it but no, no."

Samantha uses the deepest of mother-child bonds, the experience of giving birth, as an analogy to capture the depth of her feelings and the intimacy of her relationship.

> Do you remember what it felt like when your first child was born…when you held her in your arms the very first time, that overwhelming sense of being alive? Remember that? That…sort of a connection with yourself and with

> your child, and with whoever put you there. There's this overwhelming sense of purpose: "Here I am. This is the moment". When working with kids with disabilities, I felt that—repeatedly.

Two co-researchers, Samantha and Rochester compare the experience of vocation to the relationship with a lover. Rochester feels love and passion for his vocation and knows that, even if he promised to give up his music, he would continue to "cheat" with her because he "can't stop doing this." Like many a lover relationship, there is a certain amount of obsession and jealousy, at least for Rochester. Samantha too uses the analogy of being in love to describe her relationship with vocation: "It's …like being in love. It's an overwhelming sense of elation that will carry you through all the rough things that are going to be ahead…it gives me a sense of joy."

All three co-researchers have intimate relationships with their vocation; all are passionate about and love what they do. Interestingly, it is the two female co-researchers who use the mothering analogy. Both happen to be mothers. Rochester, who does not have children, uses a lover analogy to describe his relationship with vocation.

Relationships are about reciprocity; there is give and take, push and pull. The co-researchers not only give to their vocations but they also receive much in return. For Rochester, "it sends me through all of my emotions; it gives me …an emotional workout and makes me feel alive…It's given me everything." For Pam, there is a spillover from her work to her social life: "I make more friends because of what I do." And, she communicates with her animal patients in a reciprocal way: "there's a...transfer of emotions." The "vocational" literature (Moore, 1992; Coles, 1993; Gibran, 1984) acknowledges the reciprocity between one's self and one's vocation. Interestingly, Pam is the only one who experiences vocation as a great source of comfort and contentment, as "more of a yoga thing", not unlike what Jenkinson (1991) addresses when describing Kovalski's "greatest comfort" (p. 64).

Vocation, as an intimate relationship, is complex and intricate. As such, it produces not only positive feelings such as joy, elation, enthusiasm, pride, excitement, passion, anticipation, comfort, and contentment. Intimacy can provoke negative reactions and result in negative feelings, from self-doubt, anxiety, and fear, to depression, anger, irritation, and frustration. For example, Rochester puts his "blood, sweat, and tears" into his music only to be under-appreciated by audiences who have never seen a live band, prejudged by police and club owners, or rejected by record companies. Because he is so intimately involved with his music and so deeply invested emotionally, it is very difficult for him to not take others' reactions personally.

Rochester has sacrificed much for his vocation but cannot give it up, despite more lucrative opportunities elsewhere. Despite suffering, sacrifice, and negativity, the co-researchers find meaning in suffering (Frankl, 1962) and carry what Luther (in Kolden, 1994) referred to as a "cross" in a way that ultimately reaps positive results. Whereas the "cross" is heavier for Samantha and Rochester, Pam experiences only some mild irritation and frustration but doesn't feel that she has made any sacrifices for her vocation. Thus, although all the co-researchers have an intimate relationship with their vocation, each experiences varying degrees of positive and negative.

## The Reflected Self

All three co-researchers commented on the perceptions others, including parents, peers, teachers, colleagues, and authority figures, had about them. One sees oneself, at least in part, through the eyes of others. What others reflect back to us influences how we think about ourselves. A resonating and noteworthy theme for all co-researchers was their experience of strong parental support. Hillman's (1996) acorn theory contends that what is inherent to a person, is inherent, regardless of parental influences. Although he suggests that parental influence is overrated and discusses at some length "the parental fallacy" (p.63-91), the experiences of the co-researchers would seem to indicate otherwise.

All experienced very strong parental support, not just of their gifts but of who they are. Here, it is important to distinguish support from control. These are not stereotypical stage parents, pushing their children to perform a preconceived role that the child must be molded into. Rather, this is support of them as individuals. For example, Samantha's mother is a particularly strong influence; she supports, loves, and accepts Samantha unconditionally, even if she may not fully understand what the appeal of her work is to her or want the details. Samantha noted that "the look of love in her [mother's] eyes was amazing because I knew I could do anything I wanted to do because she believed in me." Samantha knows that this is acceptance of her, not only acceptance of what she does, but knowing that what she does is who she is. Both Samantha and Rochester recall stories of their childhoods, recounted by their parents. Pam recounts her own animal stories and early memories and remembers her father advising her:

> You're better off to love what you do and make less money than make more money and hate what you do and be miserable forever and get all the health problems that come with that misery.

This is advice she has taken to heart. Whether the theme of strong parental support is consistent for all other "called" individuals, I cannot say. However, for this study, parental support does seem to be a more important and sustaining influence for the nurturing and development of vocation than the literature would suggest. Except for Anne Roe (1956), who was influenced by both Maslow's (1968) hierarchy of needs and the psychoanalytic notion that one's early years are strong predictors of adult behaviour, there is little else in the literature review that supports the theme that strong parental support is critical to the achievement of vocation.

Just as Hillman (1996) recognized that story has two components: story as it actually happened and the story as it is remembered, so too Samantha acknowledges that her mother's story may have changed or been elaborated over time. Nonetheless, these stories, personal narratives, or personal myths (Bogart, 1994) remained important influences in sustaining their belief that they had a special gift and purpose in life. Bogart (1994) suggests six different ways to arrive at vocation, none of which involve parental support or the recognition by others of one's giftedness. This research extends the theory in present vocational literature.

Hillman (1996), in discussing Berkeley's notion of "to be is to be perceived" (p. 126) recognizes the importance of mentors and role models in identifying and encouraging the gifts and talents of those he studied. He understood how "perception bestows blessing" (p. 127) by bringing into being and maintaining that which is perceived. However, although parental perception was important to my co-researchers, the influence of mentors and guides appears to have had minimal effects. Although all received primarily positive recognition and reinforcement from teachers, peers, and colleagues, none of them reported having had a strong mentor or guide. Thus, "being perceived" by mentors and coaches seems considerably less significant here than is suggested by Hillman.

Whereas Hillman's accounts of others' perceptions are primarily positive, the reflection seen by the co-researchers in the eyes of others was not always a pretty or gratifying one. For Samantha, peers' derogatory comments, and the cold, crass reactions of medical staff result in a firm rejection of their opinions and behaviours and reinforces her own view of herself. Negative stereotyping by police, club owners, and custom officers pushes Rochester to do the exact opposite of what they expect of him. When Pam is told by a professor that she should consider lowering her standards by pursuing animal husbandry instead of veterinary medicine, it serves as a wake-up call that reinforces her self-definition and her vision. Thus, the reactions of others, whether positive or negative, have primarily positive results on the researcher but do not carry the same weight or level of influence suggested by Hillman. It would appear from this study that parental support is far more important than the recognition of mentors, guides, or coaches.

### Other-directedness

Clustering the second order themes, service to others, and spirituality, under the third order heading, other-directedness, was a difficult choice. I could just have easily justified grouping spirituality under the theme of congruence. However, I chose to include it here because Fox's (1994) definition of spirituality, like Luther's (in Bogart, 1984) notion of vocation, is based on service to others, contributions to the greater community.

The notion of service to others is strongly supported in the "vocational" literature (Jones, 1996; Natale & Naher, 1997; Cochran, 1990; Roszak, 1979; Toms &Toms, 1998; Gilbert, 1998; Hardy, 1990) and is a basic tenet of Luther's notion of vocation as responsible service. Within the psychology literature, Frankl's

(1962) responsible action (for others), Erikson's (1963) midlife developmental stage, generativity, and Maslow's (1971) self-actualization, all incorporate other-directedness. Although contemporary career development literature, (Hansen, 1997; Miller-Tiedman, 1989), in its embrace of what appears to be vocation but is called otherwise, addresses the notion of service, traditional career development theory's notion of career is virtually void of the concept of service. Adult education foundational literature (Collins, 1991; Welton, 1998; Lindeman, 1961) positions vocation and service to others within a broad social, political and economic arena.

All the co-researchers are other-directed; all hope to make a difference in the lives of others, in one way or another. Samantha serves others by helping handicapped children and their families; she feels responsible and wants to impact their lives in a positive way. Rochester brings joy, connection, validation, and healing to others through song-writing, performing, teaching music therapy, and producing his own and others' music. As a "purveyor of emotion and thought", he helps others by giving voice to their stories and easing their loneliness. His music connects him, in a meaningful way, to others and allows him to be "a part of somebody else." Pam provides service to others through healing animals, teaching their masters, and by providing a range of both western and eastern medical services. She loves and nurtures not only the animal patients but their masters as well. The practice of holistic medicine allows her to provide a more homey and comforting atmosphere.

The "vocational" literature strongly emphasizes the link between spirituality and vocation (Fox, 1994; Jones, 1996; Hansen, 1997; Toms & Toms, 1998; Gilbert, 1998; Moore, 1992; Hillman, 1996; Bolles, 1991) and contemporary career development theory is beginning to follow suit (Miller-Tiedeman, 1989; Gelatt, 1989; Hansen, 1997). The traditional, rationalistic career development literature and the adult education foundational literature do not address the notion of spirituality. One expects this of the traditional career development literature because it is largely lacking in anything to do with vocation. However, it is disappointing that the adult education literature, which contributes so much to the concept of vocation, does not include spirituality.

Samantha describes her vocation as being "part of my soul", and "like a religion" insofar as it gives her hope, faith, strength, a sense of community, the value of family, and a connection with the divine. Two co-researchers, Rochester and Pam, associate spirituality with the healing process. Pam describes it like this:

> My spirituality…it's like the essence of me; it's the core; it's more than my personality; it's more than my ethics and morals; it's the root of my being…the healing part of it is part of that.

Pam connects on a very deep level with her patients, on what appears to be a spiritual level: "I can feel their fear and they can feel my intent", a level that she considers deeper than the use of dialogue with humans. Although a sense of spirituality appeared weaker for Rochester than the other co-researchers, he seemed to be making a spiritual connection when comparing the creative process to the feeling of peace and weightlessness associated with "walking on the moon". He describes the spiritual aspect of healing through the medium of music:

> I believe that sound waves can heal diseases. You can find a frequency that can make you see colours or make you feel a certain way or kill a cell…so it's kind of spiritual in that sense that it can cure or heal, so not like religion and dogma.

As such, it is interesting that, while both Pam and Rochester heal others in different ways, so too they are spiritually healed. Pam feels comfort, peace, contentment, and balance as a result of loving what she does. Rochester's vocation promotes his mental health: "It keeps me alive…I'd be crazy, for sure, [without it]." So, for these two individuals, the reciprocity of the relationship with vocation means that, in healing, one is also healed.

For all three co-researchers, the link between spirituality and service to others is important and, as such, identifies strongly with Fox's (1994) definition of spirituality, and Luther's notion of vocation. Spirituality is embedded in "contributing to the greater community" (p.1).

## Discussion summary and transition

It would appear that the experiences of the co-researchers are largely reflected in the literature review, with a few differences. Whereas their experiences resonate most strongly in the "vocational" literature, this is perhaps no surprise. After all, the "vocational" literature category is a self-created one, a self-selected, loose, and eclectic collection. Whether Hillman (1996) or Roszak (1979) would agree with my classification is doubtful. However, the "vocational" literature serves as a foil to reflect the inadequacies of the career development literature, where we find largely a paucity of reference to vocation, with the exception of those in what I have termed the "contemporary" category. Even within this category, however, I noted the avoidance of the word vocation.

The psychology literature is important insofar as it addresses one of the strongest themes that emerged from this study, the theme of congruence. Finally, the adult education literature adds an important new dimension to the notion of vocation, that of critical reflection, used to determine appropriate care and action in the world. This social action element is an important new dimension. Whereas the "vocational" literature and psychology address the importance of revolutions from within, adult educational foundational literature is more concerned with revolutions in the larger social contexts.

The different perspectives contained within each category of literature are reflected in the research paradigms from which they emerge. There was some discussion in Chapter 2 about Neuman's (2000) classification of research paradigms into three main types: positivism; interpretive social science ; and critical social science. Having discussed the research findings within the context of the multi-disciplinary literature review, it will now be easier to reconcile each discipline's perspectives by understanding its foundations in a particular research paradigm.

My presuppositions, discussed in Chapter 3, were largely correct. This is probably because I had already had a fairly solid grounding in the traditional notion of vocation thanks to my Catholic upbringing. However, my presupposition about women was not borne out. I had expected that the female co-researchers would experience barriers to achieving vocation, and would be burdened with family/work conflicts. I expected they would be overwhelmed by the many demands placed upon them. This was not so. Rather, Pam's experience reveals quite the opposite.

Her vocation improves all other aspects of her life, including her home life and marriage.

## Implications for further research

There appears to be very little information available about the lived experiences of "ordinary" people pursuing secular vocations. Additional qualitative research into this area would be timely and appropriate.

The strongest theme that emerged in this study was that of congruence. For these co-researchers, vocation and self are united. Thus, the field of psychology needs to do more study on the notion of congruence and the role vocation plays in developing it. And, more research needs to be done to determine effective methods that help bring forth vocations.

Hillman (1996), when discussing the importance of the "perception" of others, suggested that others, such as mentors, coaches, and guides, played a key role in helping bring forth the vocations of others. Although the relevance of the role of mentors and guides did not emerge at all in this study, it is nonetheless a viable area of research. As practitioners, we are called to encourage, support, and guide. We need to learn how to "perceive" the gifts and talents of others and reflect them back to our clients.

Although strong parental support emerged as a very strong theme for all the co-researchers in my study, it did not do so in the literature. Additional studies need to be performed to determine whether parental influence does, in fact, assist in the birthing of vocations, and if so, then parents need some practical methods that will assist them in helping their children.

Maslow (1968) speculated that perhaps only "peakers" achieve self-actualization. However, only two of the co-researchers reported having had peak experiences. Whether or not peak experiences constitute a criterion for deciding whether or not one has a vocation has not been determined. More research in this area would be interesting, particularly if it examined methods by which people might attain these experiences.

Two of the co-researchers, Pam and Rochester, felt their vocations contributed strongly to their health and sense of well-being. More research needs to be done between the link between health (both psychological and physical) and vocation. The question needs to be asked: *Who is healthier: the "careerist" or the "called"?*

This study indicated that a sense of vocation arrives very early in life, an observation not entirely supported by the literature. If Bogart (1994) is correct, vocation can be achieved through a variety of methods, including vision quests, dreams, synchronistic events, and others. More research needs to be done in this area.

## Implications for Vocational Counselling

The implications of this study for vocational counseling are huge. How much easier it is to approach the topic of vocation from the paradigm of positivism which forms the underpinnings of much of the career development literature. One need not consider human values and needs, only logic, facts, and pre-existing patterns that can be discovered and then applied to other situations. How much simpler it is to think in terms of skill, job, occupation, career, and decision-making models. It is much easier to dissect components of a person (interests, personality preferences, values, skills) with the help of various assessment tools. Matching one's skill sets and qualifications with suitable opportunities in the job market is a relatively easy task.

However, when counseling for vocation rather than career, we are shifting our paradigm perspective from positivism to interpretive social science and critical social science. These perspectives mark a radical shift from positivism. The "vocational" literature and the selected psychology theorists fit the interpretive social science paradigm wherein the focus is individual creation of meaning within the context of social action. Phenomenology fits well within this paradigm because it arrives at truth as it is deemed "true" by each co-researcher.

The adult education foundational literature fits best within the critical social science paradigm and, as such, adds an important new dimension to the notion of vocation. Adult education's call for critical reflection promotes the need for social change, represents a challenge to exploitation and illusion, and rejects complacent acceptance.

When we counsel from the perspective of vocation, we are not looking only at the identifiable parts of a person. Rather, we are seeking to understand and promote the client's self-understanding of their own "gestalt." We are, of course, so much more than the sum of our skills, qualifications, and accomplishments. It is this deep complexity that is captured in the notion of vocation.

In Chapter 1, I asked the question: *What and how does the concept and experience of calling contribute to the field of career development and vocational counselling practice?* If our work has to potential to be such an integral part of who we are, why is there so little attention paid to vocation in the career development literature? Perhaps this is because the focus of career development, coming from a positivistic paradigm, is primarily on rationalistic methodologies and decision-making models, with a heavy reliance on labour market trends and acquiring the "right skills" for the future marketplace. The focus of career development, then, is in direct opposition to the perspective of vocation which reflects a different world perspective, one that is closer to the interpretive social science and critical social science paradigms.

It would appear that the notions of career and vocation are at odds with each other. This calls into question the very fundamentals of the field, the very naming and defining of its basic terms. If the notions of vocation and career are intrinsically and substantially different, and serve different purposes, how is it possible, or even desirable, to nurture others' vocational development within a field focused on instrumental career development?

I realize now that even that the question posed at the beginning of the second last paragraph contains a paradoxical dilemma, an oxymoron of sorts. Calling and vocational counseling produce a good fit but the field of career development is the odd man out. Asking this question is similar to mixing oil and water: they simply do not mix. Given the focus of career development, and despite its recent efforts to affiliate itself with the notion of vocation, it remains at loggerheads with vocational counseling. Had I worded my question differently, perhaps asking instead: *What and how does the concept and experience of calling contribute to the field of career development and career counselling practice?*, it would have been much easier to answer. The answer would have been "very little." Really, the question should have been: *What and how does the concept and experience of calling contribute to the field of vocational development and vocational counseling practice?* The answer would have been "very much and very well."

For the field of career development to change its focus from career to vocation, all the while persisting in the usage of the term career, is somewhat deceitful and akin to asking a tiger to change its stripes to spots. A tiger with its stripes is an admirable beast, just as the field of career development also has its own purposes and applications in today's world. But to call a tiger with spots a tiger is incorrect because it would be inferring that a tiger and a leopard are one and the same. If we accept that a tiger will never be a leopard, then why do we seem to think that we can transform career into vocation? They are two different creatures entirely. The first, career, has to do with economics, public policy, and labour market needs, and, as such, is coming from the perspective of positivism. The other, vocation, pertains to something much deeper and more intimate because it is intrinsic, personally meaningful, life sustaining, self-defining, and service oriented. As such, it fits with the interpretive social science and critical social science paradigms. Thus, the concepts come from starkly different paradigms.

Perhaps the confusion began with Parsons (1909) when he unfortunately called his matching system "vocational" guidance. Since then, the word, vocation, has been increasingly perverted and confused, and has taken on a "cheapened sense" (Cochran, 1990, p.2) where it has come to be largely associated with job, occupation, position, or profession. And, it has also come to mean the trades, as in "vocational training" and therefore perceived as inferior to the notion of career (Rehm,1990). Perhaps this partly explains career development's desire to assimilate the underlying tenets of vocation while avoiding the use of its name and its current connotations. Unfortunately, recent attempts by the field of career development to further encroach on the notion of vocation have merely served to muddy the waters even more. It is increasingly more difficult to determine which is which. Yet, despite this mounting confusion, or perhaps because of it, there exists a movement to facilitate the convergence of career development theories. It would seem that further convergence would only serve to magnify the problem and further confuse the issues.

Super's (1976) definition of career and its many permutations, including Miller-Tiedeman's (1989) *lifecareer*, Gysbers & Moore's (1981) *life career development*, Hansen's (1997*) integrative life planning*, have become so broad and inclusive as to be virtually meaningless and useless to the average person and even the practitioner. One's career now encompasses virtually every aspect of life, from work, and education, to eating, sleeping, and volunteer activities, and also the roles of parent, spouse, and community member. To make the matter even more confusing, the contemporary career development theorists are attempting to expand its meaning even further, to include elements rightfully belonging to the notion of vocation.

*Career* is a term developed within the twentieth century. As such, it fails to capture the ancient, intrinsic, and fundamental truth that remains core to who we are, that is, the core of vocation. It cannot address the most important elements and key questions pertaining to life purpose, gifts, and service. Nor should it. Vocation is more difficult to arrive at perhaps but so much more gratifying than answering questions like: *What's "hot" in the market place?*, and *What are my skills and how do I market them?* Vocation is more ideological and complex than career; it presents greater challenges to the practitioner who can no longer simply apply the old "test 'em and tell 'em" approaches.

One of the measures of a good theory is its usefulness, its applicability to real life. It appears that the term *career*, as it is currently being used, is no longer useful. It would be better for the proponents of convergence among career development theories to begin by re-examining their purpose and deciding which master it is they serve. If it is the master of economics and public policy, so be it. This is a viable and useful role. However, if they choose to move simultaneously into the realm of vocation, as they appear to be doing, then they are truly confounding their purpose. Rather than trying to be all things to all people, the field of career development would be wise to determine what its own calling is and then pursue it.

Vocation and spirituality may be the newest bandwagon upon which to jump but it is an inappropriate one for the field of career development to ride. Although the intention may be honourable, the results are not. This recent movement represents a dangerous and misleading element which only serves to further confuse the average individual seeking help with major life transitions.

If this study has suggested anything, it is that career is not vocation, and vocation is not career. Rather, vocation transcends career. Career counseling is not equivalent to vocational counseling. Their perspectives and purposes are very different. How do we decrease the confusion between these two approaches? Perhaps we should do as the contemporary career development theorists (Miller-Tiedeman, 1989; Gelatt, 1989) have done and simply create yet another term signifying only yet another variation of Super's (1976) definition of career. I think not. Rather than further stir the already mired pot of confused terms by creating yet another, I suggest a far simpler, more practical, and ultimately more meaningful solution. Let us simply return to the original meanings of the terms career and vocation. Besides, Hansen (1997) argues that the old meaning of career still persists, that is, career as occupation or profession. Certainly, this is the common, everyday usage of the term, as used by ordinary people.

Let us use Shertzer's (1981) term for career: "the sequence of occupations, jobs, and positions held during the course of a person's lifetime" (p. 179). Shertzer recognizes the long term nature of a career but does not adulterate the term by including leisure, education, retirement, and the multitude of roles included by Super. Let us use Natale and Naher's (1997) notion of vocation as: "the central focus and influence of life…a call to greatness, fulfilling the potential in an aura of freedom…a service to humanity…a job well done for its own sake" (p. 239). These definitions of career and vocation are distinctively different from one another. As such, they are considerably more meaningful and pertinent than the increasingly convoluted meanings so prevalent in the career development literature.

Someone with vocation may or may not have a career, in the sense that Shertzer defines career above. Would a homemaker or active volunteer consider themselves to have a career? Probably not. Yet they may consider themselves to have a vocation. Would Mother Theresa have described what she did as a career? I don't think so. Surely, she would have described her work as a vocation. According to the above definitions, the co-researchers in this study had both a vocation and a career comprising occupations and jobs. However, their vocations transcended their careers insofar as they defined their vocations as essential to their personhood. Their vocations were core to who they were in a way that the occupations and jobs comprising their careers were not. There are many people who have a career but do not experience a sense of vocation. Thus, career and vocation are neither mutually exclusive nor inclusive. It is possible for them to co-exist yet neither is essential to the other. They are simply different entities with different meanings.

To reiterate, if it is career counseling we are offering, then let us offer that. For example, when I do executive coaching, I consider that to be career counseling because it is within the context of the client's corporate culture and larger work environment. However, when I am dealing with the key questions, *Why am I here?* and *What is my purpose?* then I am providing vocational guidance. Both career counseling and vocational counseling are important but they are not the same animal.

## Conclusion

Where have all the callings gone? All three co-researchers believe that everyone has a vocation but may not have had the good fortune, as yet, to realize or discover it. Whether they are right is impossible to determine. My belief is that everyone has the *potential* to experience vocation but not everyone does. There are many people who feel lost, disconnected from what they do, adrift in a sea of confusion and meaninglessness. When I spoke to people about the experiences of the co-researchers, their reaction was often one of amazement and envy. Individuals seem to know whether what they do constitutes a vocation or not. I would surmise that the majority of people do not experience a strong sense of vocation. Whether this situation is due to the unrelenting push by industry and government to meet labour market demands, insufficient encouragement from parents, the failure of the educational system to nurture and develop vocations, or insufficient understanding of the concept of vocation by the career development and counselling fields, I cannot say with any certainty. However, it is likely that there are numerous factors that prevent the conception and inhibit the birth and development of vocation.

Whatever the reasons for the seeming scarcity of vocations, this study suggests that it is still possible to achieve a sense of vocation, even in today's tumultuous world. Vocation lives—and not just for those with extraordinary gifts but for "ordinary" individuals as well. Those with vocation become extraordinary through the enactment of vocation.

Career practitioners, vocational counselors, adult educators, and all helping professionals are in a unique position that enables them to assist others in making meaningful, soulful and critical decisions. This is an exciting time in which to practice. The fields of career development and adult education are in transition, and like all transitions, provide us with opportunities to be creative, inventive and magical. We need to seek opportunities to affect not just the personal realms of individual clients and students, but also the larger domains of society, politics, and economics. We are in the unique position of being able to educate individuals, groups, the public, politicians, economists, and potential employers about adult education and career development issues which affect us all. This social activist role presents an opportunity to assist in the return of vocation-worthy work and enhances the likelihood of achieving our own vocations.

Roszak's (1979) vision for the future is to liberate the life-giving impulse of vocation by being *in* our work with the "full force of our personality, mind and body, heart and soul" (p. 218). What higher aspiration can there be for practitioners than to assist in the release of this transformative energy?

Lindeman (1961) believed that "revolutions are occasionally necessary" (p. 49). Should world conditions continue as they are, and I think they will, then a revolution may be necessary. Combined with the radical thought presented in adult education foundational literature, vocation has great potential to change the world, for it is a revolution from within that is first required before we can achieve a revolution without. Vocation feeds heart and soul, nourishes gifts to fulfill human needs, combines meaning with action, and fuels passion and purpose. In short, vocation sustains both self and society. As such, it is direct opposition to the positivistic paradigm underlying much of the career development literature and challenges its rationalistic and deterministic perspectives.

To create a new world we must first imagine it. We must imagine it into existence by dreaming ideas that forge action. To provoke this new vision, let us critically reflect upon the relevant questions posed by Mechthild Hart (1992):

> What would educational programmes and responses look like if they were oriented towards an affirmation of life rather than profit? towards preservation and renewal rather than limitless exploitation of nature? towards social responsibility and community rather than individual success? towards building relationships of love and care rather than control? towards work as a form of self-expression and sensuous enjoyment rather than a form of submission to technology and distance from material reality? (p. 211)

These questions can help us begin to envision a new world where vocation, informed by critical theory, can shape a revolution.

Imagine...

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# APPENDIX A

## PRESENTATION OF SAMANTHA'S DATA ANALYSIS, IN TABULAR FORM

Contained within this appendix are two tables. Table 1 includes relevant excerpts taken from Samantha's transcribed protocol, paraphrases of each excerpt, and first order themes. Table 2 represents the next level of abstraction. It contains clusters of first order themes that comprise second order themes.

Table 1
First Order Thematic Abstraction of Samantha's Experience of Calling

| | | Two Levels of Abstraction | |
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| | Excerpts from Transcribed Interview | 1. Paraphrases | 2. First Order Themes |
| 1. | I was the seventh daughter of the seventh son, born on the seventeenth day of the seventh month and I weighed seven pounds and...my mother is very superstitious and she knew that the seventh child of the seventh child would carry a special gift. And she [nun at hospital who blessed all the newborns] said, "this is a gifted child...this child will have a special gift to give the world; this will be a truly, truly special child", and my Mom always told me that story [about her remarkable birth and its unique circumstances] as I grew older...and I don't know how true it was...maybe...it became more elaborate as the years went on but she always told me that story; and the look of love in her eyes was amazing because I knew I could do anything I wanted to do because she believed in me. | Recollection of mother's story of Samantha's birth and nun's proclamation, which conveyed the message that she was gifted; reinforcement of the story over time; Mother's love strengthened her belief in herself. | Samantha believes that she has an inherent gift; mother's story of her unique birth circumstances reinforced her belief in her giftedness; mother's love and belief in her fostered the conviction that she was capable of anything. |
| 2. | I knew that I had to do something with a purpose and it was my job to find out what that purpose was. So, I firmly believe that all of us are put here for a reason and I think a lot of that base comes from the fact that I was raised as a Catholic and there was a lot of spirituality in my childhood as I was growing older and there was a reason for everything occurring and there was a plan. And... there was a purpose for all of us and my Mom was very instrumental in instilling that belief in me. | Conviction that she has a life purpose and must discover it; believes that everyone has a purpose and life has an ordered plan; beliefs stem from childhood spirituality and from mother's strong influence. | Necessity of discovering her own purpose; belief in a life purpose and plan for self and others has its foundation in her own spirituality and her mother's influence. |
| 3. | She [mother] supports me in every decision that I make. She may not always agree with me but she supports me. | Acknowledgement that her mother has always supported and continues to support all her decisions, regardless of whether she agrees with them or not. | Mother's support is unconditional and constant. |

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| 4. | It [realization that she had a special calling] was in Grade 10. I'd always known even before that time that I was gifted with people...that I had a natural ability to communicate and empathize and listen to people; I had a way with children younger than myself; I tended to be the neighbourhood caretaker of children younger than myself…and I would always be out there [in nearby park] taking care of little children throughout the day and the neighbourhood children would always call on me. So, even as a young, young child...I was a caretaker; I was a caregiver. | First experience of calling was in tenth grade but she has recollection of an even earlier realization, at a young age, that she was a caregiver who had a gift with people. | First experience of calling was in tenth grade; realization of own giftedness at a young age. Congruence between who she is and what she does; has always been a "caregiver". |
| 5. | But when I was in Grade ten... our counsellor...said, "I've asked the teachers to recommend students who would be appropriate for working at the Development Centre across the street...four of your six teachers have recommended you." | Learns from school counsellor that most of her teachers recommend her from amongst her peers as appropriate for working with children with disabilities. | Recognition by teachers of her talents and recommendation of her as suitable for work with handicapped children. |
| 6. | And so she [nun] asked me then, in Grade 10, to volunteer my lunch hours...and help with the feeding program; and when you're fifteen years old, that's a huge sacrifice, especially in high school, because...I could have gone home every lunch hour. My friends all hung out and had...fun. I gave all that up at fifteen and I spent the next three years of my life at the Development Centre, every, every lunch hour. | Decision to relinquish 'normal' teen activities to commit her lunch hours to help feed handicapped children; cognizant of the sacrifice involved in her decision. | Willingness to make sacrifices to commit to volunteer work with special needs children; foregoes "normal" teen lunchtime activities. |

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| 7. | The moment that changed my life is as vivid in my memory now as it was then...a little girl...Jennifer who was 5 years old...with severe cerebral palsy and who couldn't basically move, had no real vocalization. I was in the process of feeding her her lunch...and I said, "Jennifer, what do you want?", and...she said, clear as day, "Milk". Her worker heard her... and she immediately burst into tears because it was the first word that Jennifer had ever said; and it was because for two years I had been uttering the word "milk" to her...and from that point on, they realized she could communicate... with her parents. So, that was the moment that changed my life. The power of a five-year old child... I knew right then and there what I wanted to do. | Realizes that her work with a handicapped child made a significant difference in child's life and that of her parents' lives. This realization changed her own life as well because she now had a clearer vision of what she wanted to do with her life. | Dramatic progress with a handicapped child results in a personal epiphany, a sudden revelation, sense of congruence and "fit"; experiences greater clarity, a heightened awareness or "knowing" of what she wants to do with her life. |
| 8. | I knew even before I wrote the test [vocational assessment tool] what my profile would be. Basically, it came out saying that I would be working in the social field...geared toward...child care worker or teacher of some sort...that I would also be skilled at teaching others how to do the skill and so on. So, it was right on the money; so I knew what I wanted to do. | Speculation about results of vocational assessment tool is confirmed; tool served to validate vocational direction into people-oriented, helping fields like child care and teaching. | Vocational assessment provides further confirmation and affirmation of her life direction as a caregiver. Congruence between vocational assessment and her own "knowing". |
| 9. | What I found when I was taking my university course [degree], is that I was taking...courses that had nothing to do with what I needed to do and it frustrated me because when you're so sure of what you want to be when you grow up, any stall is frustrating to you. | Experiences frustration at having to take courses unrelated to her goal; being so focused on her goal translates into even greater frustration when presented with obstacles. | Strong directional focus increases frustration with anything unrelated to her goal, particularly university courses that seem irrelevant to her goal. |

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| 10. | After I got my B.Ed., I wasn't sure I wanted to be a teacher and that was a really, really tough experience for me and I often still say that I'm...not in special Ed because I'm a teacher; I'm a teacher because I'm in Special Education. If I wasn't a teacher I know I'd be in Special Ed somewhere else because I know that's my calling to work with children who have disabilities. I could work with them in the community, in their homes and with their families. I don't necessarily have to work with them in school. | Experiences difficulties after achieving her B.Ed. but this leads to realization that teaching is not her calling but working with children with disabilities is; recognition that teaching is not the only way to fulfill her calling. | Achievement of B.Ed. results in confusion, further contemplation, and a more definitive sense of her true calling. Has a heightened sense of congruence. Belief that one's calling can be fulfilled in more than one way. |
| 11. | To put myself through university, I worked. And I didn't want to work in a bank and I didn't want to work in a restaurant. A lot of my friends were doing that and were making good money. But what I chose to do was to stay in the field. I knew that's where I needed to be. | Deliberate choice to work in her chosen field throughout university years despite more lucrative opportunities elsewhere; sense of knowing what she needed to be doing. | Purposeful choice to work in own field throughout university; knowledge that she needed to do so, despite more lucrative options. Experiences good fit between herself and her work. |
| 12. | So I got individuals with handicaps involved in sports in their own community...it was really, really fun. So I used recreation as a sort of platform for becoming involved with the people with disabilities. | Experiences pleasure at being able to get handicapped individuals involved in sports. Discovers another avenue, i.e., recreation, to reach the handicapped. | Enjoyment in her work; recognition that there is more than one way to fulfill her goals. |
| 13. | And so, you know, the opportunities are vast; they're so open and there are so many experiences a person could have in the field but it didn't seem to matter what experiences I had, it all led me back to my home base which was helping the child with the disability. | Realization that her field offers many diverse opportunities; all her experiences seem to lead her to the child with the disability. | Belief that all experiences invariably lead to her "home base", i.e., work with handicapped children; there are many ways to serve. |
| 14. | And it's [work with children with disabilities] not a job to me. It's part of my soul. It's part of my being. | Understanding of her work as something soul-ful, essential to who she is, and more than just a job. | Work as more than a job, as integral to her personhood; work as soul-ful. "It's part of my soul." |

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| 15. | These children became part of my life, became part of my existence, and their families became part of my, ...soul and with every child I've worked with, I've grown into a better human being... | Feeling that the children and their families became part of her soul; each experience leads to further positive personal growth. | Her work has a spiritual element that contributes to positive personal growth and soulfulness. “these children…and their families became part of my soul.” |
| 16. | And remember how I'd said before when I was in university and I had to take Anthropology courses and I became very frustrated? Because it wasn't my calling. It wasn't what I needed to do and that's where I'm at right now. What I'm doing right now [job] is not what I want to do. And that's why I've gone back to get my Master's. | Comparison of current frustration to that experienced in the past; experiencing job dissatisfaction and frustration because it [job] is not her calling; pursuit of further education in hope that it will bring her back to where she feels compelled to be. | Feelings of frustration and poor fit in current job which is not true to her calling;; pursuit of Master's degree in hope of redirecting self to a more congruent path. |
| 17. | I never intended on being a teacher for this long... fifteen years. And I'm frustrated with it because my sense is that I can only touch a certain number of children every day. It's not enough for me. I have to touch all of them. I have to physically make a difference. | Feeling frustrated and restricted in her current job where she can reach a limited number of children; feels need to make a positive difference in the lives of all children with handicaps. | Current job is a poor fit, is incongruent with need to make a substantial difference; she feels stifled in her need to make greater impact on the lives of all children with disabilities.. |
| 18. | And I'm not even sure still at this point what that difference is going to be...whether it's I write a book, whether it's I start an organization that supports parents to train their children, whether I get some position high up where I can influence a lot of people and help transform the field of special education. But I know that what I'm doing right now isn't enough...but my dream is actually to get into the trenches, to get into the community, to work with parents, and work with kids and set up programs and do more public speaking, do more training. | Expresses uncertainty about how to make a difference; dissatisfaction with current, limiting work situation; has a dream about how she'd like to help the handicapped child in future by transforming special education. | Uncertainty about how to make a difference; feels limited in current position; desire to do more for the handicapped child; has a vision of various ways in which she could “transform” the field of special education. |
| 19. | I don't even know if “calling'” is the right word; it's more like a drive. I mean I'm driven and certainly not by any financial need because financially there's no security in that. | Speculation about the right word: calling or drive. Recognition that her drive goes beyond financial need, monetary reward, or security. | Her calling has intrinsic value and drives her, irrespective of potential financial gain. |

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| 20. | Not even so much the education that I'm receiving [a Master's] but the piece of paper that I'm receiving. It gives you credibility. I know what I'm doing but other people have to know that I know what I'm doing and trust what I'm saying is good enough for their child. And that's the secret. | Recognition that, despite her knowledge, she needs further credentials to give her credibility that will further promote others' trust in her knowledge and abilities. | Recognition of her own knowledge; willingness to seek further education to gain the credibility needed to reach more children. |
| 21. | [In response to being asked to describe the emotion she felt at the time of her earliest experience of being called.] There was a lot of peer pressure at that time and I think there always is for teenagers in any setting; but for me...I was the only one who was doing anything like this...I was called anything from a pansy to a goody two-shoes to a... "You've got your priorities all wacked out" to "come out and have a beer with us. Why are you wasting time with those geeky kids?" | Experience of normal teen peer pressure exacerbated by the fact that she was the only one working with handicapped children; experiences put-downs and name-calling. | Constant pursuit of goal despite peer pressure and name-calling. |
| 22. | So, I really had to mature quickly. It [peer pressure] was very difficult for me. | Gained maturity through difficulties. | Peer pressure and resulting difficulties promoted maturity. |
| 23. | I think part of the reason that they [high school peers] were teasing me was because they were fearful, right?...and I find that even now. There's a sense of fearfulness surrounding children with disabilities, a sense of unknowing. I've worked with principals in the past: you do your job, shut the door and keep the kids out of the hallway. | Expression of belief that negative reactions of others, from teen peers to principals, is fear-based. | Belief that the nature of her work makes others, from teen peers to principals, uncomfortable and fearful. |
| 24. | And even my own family, you know, we can meet for a Sunday dinner and they don't want to talk about this [my work]. Absolutely. So, a little bit of resistance there in terms of acceptance. | Realization that even family members experience discomfort and difficulties accepting her work. | Experiences some family resistance and lack of acceptance of her work. |
| 25. | But for me, it wasn't a waste of time. There was a fulfillment that I got working with the children, and I still do. The children I'm working with now have severe disabilities but when they pick up a book and read it out loud, I know they can do it because I've worked with them and I've taught them. | Experiences a sense of fulfillment in her work that comes from children achieving what she's taught them; sense of pride and accomplishment. | Pursuit of calling provides a sense of fulfillment, pride and accomplishment. |

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| 26. | There's this overwhelming sense of gratitude and I mean gratitude in the sense that I'm thankful that I've had the opportunity to be there to experience that. Like when that little girl, Jennifer, said "milk" or when I watch children take their first steps when...everybody said, "No, they'll be institutionalized". It's an incredible high, it's an incredible feeling of overwhelming satisfaction and gratitude that I was part of that. | Experiences feelings of gratitude, overwhelming satisfaction, and exhilaration resulting from having the opportunity to help children with disabilities defy the odds. | Contribution to others fosters overwhelming feelings of gratitude, satisfaction, exhilaration, and an incredible high. |
| 27. | I think that if God puts us here for a purpose and we have the opportunity to experience that purpose, we should be thankful. I'm very thankful. And, I feel sorry for people who spend their entire lives and not feel that because I could die tomorrow and know that I made a difference. I may not have made the difference...I know that what I've done has been important to many, many people. | Expression of gratitude at being able to experience her purpose; feels pity for those who don't have that opportunity; knows that her life has made a difference; still striving to make a bigger difference. | Sense of gratitude for experience of purpose; her life has meaning; her work has touched others; pity for those who don't experience purpose. |
| 28. | So that's my belief in a calling...it doesn't matter what you do, you're still going to end up doing it, right? In one aspect or another. Now, I don't know that a calling has to be a specific job; in fact, I don't think it is. I think my calling is to work with people with disabilities. | Defines calling as something inevitable, that goes beyond job, that pulls you back to what you're meant to do; expresses her calling as work with people with disabilities. | Calling defined as an inevitable, irresistible pull that is bigger than one's job; knows what her calling is. |
| 29. | You know, some of the more typical callings we think of are priesthood... or a nurse or a doctor...those big things...they're all callings...but do you know, some people are just gifted at organizing other people... like our school secretary, I think she has a calling. I think she's doing what she's meant to do and I think she feels that way too. | Further defines calling as not being restricted to occupations traditionally considered callings; believes school secretary utilizes her organizational gifts to fulfill her calling. | Defines calling as inclusive, rather than exclusive, i.e., can cut across many occupational groups. |
| 30. | So, for some of us, their call doesn't necessarily attach itself to a financially paying position. A calling could be motherhood, or something to do with the community, with other people, with organizing; it doesn't have to have anything to do with money...and I honestly feel that way about mine. If I wasn't working in the field, I would still be working in the field regardless of whether they paid me or not. | Broadens her ideas about callings; callings are not necessarily about money or jobs and can include non-paid work; expresses commitment to own calling insofar as she would do it regardless of payment. | Belief that callings include many types of work, paid and unpaid. Commitment to her own calling is not financially based. Her motivation is intrinsic and not financially driven; would work at her vocation whether paid or not. |

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| 31. | [In response to the question about her bodily sensations at the time of her earliest experience of being called.] [Sigh.] Yeah. Um. [Pause] Do you remember what it felt like when your first child was born... when you held her in your arms the very first time, that overwhelming sense of being alive? Remember that? That...that sort of a connection, with yourself and with your child, and with whoever put you there. There's this overwhelming sense of purpose: "Here I am. This is the moment". When working with kids with disabilities, I felt that--repeatedly. | Compares the bodily experience of initial calling to that of just having given birth; experiences her work with children with disabilities as a connection with others and God, and an overwhelming sense of purpose. | Regularly experiences calling as an overwhelming connection with others and the divine, of being vitally alive and purposeful. |
| 32. | "This is it; this is the moment". I felt connected to them [children with disabilities], to the purpose of being there. It gave me strength. It was like an adrenaline rush, each and every time I went in there. Now, there were some depressing moments, absolutely; there were some frustrating moments. And when I was volunteering I certainly didn't get paid for it, but it was like a light, an overwhelming feeling of emotion. I still get that feeling. | Despite feelings of frustration and sadness, her work provides a sense of purpose, connection, strength, and physical adrenaline rushes; even when not paid, she experiences strong emotions, akin to a light. | Calling experienced as light, connection to others, a "high", and overwhelming emotion; calling provides those called with strength, motivation, and energy; money does not motivate her. |
| 33. | And so when you're working with a child who has a disability and you experience that moment, it's the same feeling. It's the "Yes", this is it, I can do this; I've created this; I've made this happen". I guess a sense of power and not in a negative sense, in a positive sense...there's a real feeling of power when you've taught a child who can actually do what you've taught him to do. And I know that all teachers...feel that but those of us who work with children with special needs, who are surrounded by negativity and pessimism, when it actually occurs, the high is even greater, because you've accomplished something that nobody else thought you could. | Experiences calling as sense of power and accomplishment, even more so than other teachers; experiences a 'high' when able to achieve things, despite an atmosphere of negativity and pessimism. | Calling as an epiphany, a sudden revelation of one's capabilities; sense of power and elation at overcoming negativity to achieve results that help others. |

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| 34. | [In response to being asked about whether she experienced the fear reaction that others had.] I was extremely fearful. I remember walking in and seeing these children in wheelchairs and being extremely fearful of them. It took me experience and it took me time to overcome that fearfulness. | Acknowledges her own initial fear of handicapped children; overcame fear through time and experience. | Initial fear was an obstacle that she overcame to pursue her calling. |
| 35. | I have faced that so many times, so many times, the coldness of workers, and I think, in a sense, they become like medical professionals who distance themselves from their patients because if they don't become emotionally involved with their patients, then it doesn't hurt so much when they pass on...I…in the beginning, I tried that approach. I tried to distance myself but I wasn't capable of it. | Expression of shock and dismay at the callousness of people working with the handicapped; rationalizes their reaction of detachment as a self-defense mechanism; finds herself incapable of distancing self. | Shock at others' callous reactions to the handicapped; finds others' defensive detachment response unsuitable for self. |
| 36. | This is another one about fearfulness as well. I've had a principal... wonderful man, but his attitude towards children with disabilities was very concrete. "This coffee cup", he would say, "has more to give us than that child"...Yet, he supported me in anything I chose to do. He was an advocate if I needed him to be...So I said to him one day..."It's not what I can teach her. It's what she can teach me...And it's what she can teach you...about humanity." | Interprets principal's negative reaction to a handicapped child as fear-based; acknowledges his support of her despite his attitude; expresses her belief that the child has a lesson to teach others. | Experiences principal's support of her work despite his fear-based negative attitude; defends her conviction that handicapped children have value. |
| 37. | Yeah. I think the negative peer pressure I received in high school stopped very quickly because people came to know me for who I am and who I am is this person that I'm describing. Who I was at sixteen is not different than who I am now…that's me. | Initial negative peer pressure was replaced by acceptance of her as a person. | Peers accept who she is as a person, despite initial negative reactions. |
| 38. | So, the support I received from my family was support for me, not specifically of my job, but knowing that my job is me. | Experienced family support of her, not necessarily of her job; acceptance by family that what she does and who she is are one and the same. | Family accepts that her work is integral to her personhood and support her. |
| 39. | The friends that I have...don't really want to know what I do. They don't want details. They must know that what I do is me, and they accept that and they appreciate that and they admire that. | Experiences friends' acceptance, admiration, and appreciation of her while recognizing that they don't want to know the details of her work. | Friends accept, admire and appreciate her for who she is. |

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| 40. | One of the things that's happened is I've become the local specialist... when any of my sisters who have a friend who has a child with a disability, they give them my phone number. When...they call me...the doctor says they have this medical condition and it may affect his learning, they call me. You know, that happens all the time. | Awareness that others consider her a specialist in her field and is therefore frequently consulted. | Recognition by family and friends as a specialist. |
| 41. | So, my personal life and my professional life is never separated because I'm always doing, you know, something in the field because that's my knowledge base. | Awareness that her personal and professional lives are intricately interwoven. | Experiences a blending of her personal and professional lives. Congruence and fit. |
| 42. | Because of what I do, they [friends and family] look to me as the expert even though I don't really feel like an expert. My sister just called me about a month ago and said her five year old isn't recognizing letter sounds. What do I do? You know, so that's a huge compliment in one sense but a huge responsibility in another sense. | Awareness that her 'expert' label, while complimentary, carries huge responsibility and invokes feelings of inadequacy and uncertainty. | Others' perception of her as 'expert' is simultaneously complimentary, responsibility - laden, worrisome, and doubt-provoking. |
| 43. | So, with every calling, there comes a sense of obligation and a sense of failure if you're not able to accomplish that goal. I've got people's children in my hands... What if I can't help them? Then I haven't achieved what I've set out to achieve. | Expression of belief that every calling, including hers, encompasses both a sense of obligation and potential failure. Sense of responsibility for others. | Sense of responsibility co-exists with fear of failure and self-doubt; "What if I can't help them?" |
| 44. | And that [possibility of failure] worries me because a calling is, like I said, is a drive; it drives you through your entire existence and it's almost like you're not satisfied until you reach that next plateau, until I've touched as many people as I can touch. Now, maybe I'll never reach that but in the interim, I'm worried that if I don't reach that, I'll fail. And I can't bear the thought of failure. | Experiences calling as a constant, lifelong, insatiable drive that continuously pushes her to the next level of achievement, to 'touch' even more people. Expression of worry about not reaching her goal, and fear of failure. | Calling is an insatiable, ongoing drive that pushes her to greater levels of achievement and service to others; fear of failure is invoked. Calling is her life theme. Congruence. |

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| 45. | [In response to a question asking what the reactions of others is to her calling.] I get the sense that I've been placed on a pedestal. I guess I get two senses. One is: "why is she wasting her life helping people who can't help themselves?" and the other one is closer to sainthood...so, two almost opposite ends of a pendulum...so, I guess when they view me, there's usually an acceptance and a reverence or a disinterest and it's one of the two. | Senses a split reaction from others to her calling: admiration and reverence or repulsion and disinterest. | Others' reactions to her calling are polarized: reverence or repulsion. |
| 46. | I guess the same would happen if you took priesthood; some people would say, "What a waste!"...on the other end of the spectrum... "Without you, we would have no guidance". Right? So I think that would occur with any calling. At least it's occurred with mine. There's a real split view on me. | Comparison of own calling to that of priesthood. Speculation that others who are 'called', like priests, get similar, polarized reactions as well. | Surmises that all callings spark strong, polarized reactions in others. |
| 47. | [In response to a question about what effects others' reactions had on her experience of calling] I think it pushed me ahead. Yeah. In the beginning, with the peer pressure, that may have had the effect of stopping me but it didn't... It was like I was saying, "If you don't think I can do this, well, I'm going to show you." Right?...then when my parents became so proud of what I'd done, it gave me the courage to continue even further; and when friends would look at me in awe and say, "Wow, unbelievable", it would push me even further. And even today, every single day of my job I'll have people say, "You do amazing things with these kids"...it makes me do more amazing things... It pushes me further...towards this goal that I can't even see, it's so high. | Perception that others' reactions to her calling had positive effects insofar as they served to push her forward; even the negative teenaged peer pressure provoked in her a positive, albeit defiant, response; parents' pride and friends' awe give her courage and ambition to go even further. | Others' reactions to her calling [parents' pride, friends' awe, peer pressure], whether negative or positive, have a positive effect that encourages and motivates her to continually strive to attain new goals. Congruence—others recognize the "fit" between who she is and what she does and acknowledge her accomplishments. |

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| 48. | [In response to question, "Could you please describe any impact the experience of calling has had on your life?"] It is my life. So, it's a pretty huge impact. I can't imagine who I'd be if I didn't do what I did, if I didn't have this purpose, this calling. I think it's made an impact on my personality, on my outlook on life, on my sense of security with my own family, with my children. It's given me hope, it's created a sense of strength in me. It's almost like a religion to me, in the sense that it's almost like a spirituality and that gives us strength. So it's definitely affected who I am; it's impacted my personality and my approach with people and every action of every day. | Describes her calling as her life, her purpose; it is who she is; it has impacted all aspects of her life and has given her hope, strength, security, and spirituality. | Her 'calling' is the defining force of her life, personality, and relationships and impacts her positively through hope, strength, security, and spirituality. Congruence—vocation pervades all aspects of her life. |
| 49. | I'm not strongly connected to Catholicism but I am strongly connected to the field [work with handicapped children], so I think probably being raised in the Catholic church gave me a base of understanding as to how important faith is, how important family is and community is and helping each other... And what my calling gives me is a sense of purpose and a sense of community and a sense of hope and faith, which is very similar to what the church gives my mother. The church doesn't do that for me anymore. Well, it never did but my calling does; my job does... It's a sense of spirituality, without any doubt. It's a sense of soul building. | Experiences a strong spiritual connection to her calling; it builds her soul and gives her spirituality, purpose, hope, and faith, and values rooted in family, community, and service to others; acknowledges the church's role in instilling values. | Experiences calling as spiritual but not religious; acknowledgement of influence of Catholic church in instilling values of family, community, and service to others. |
| 50. | [In response to "What is your current experience of being called?"] I have an overwhelming sense of frustration... [that] drives me to improve myself…what I'm doing is never quite good enough. And I think that's important that I'm feeling that because it pushes me forward. | Currently experiences enormous frustration; appreciates the role frustration plays in driving her forward to meet her goals and improve self. | Calling fosters frustration which in turn fosters continual striving for self-improvement. |

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| 51. | [In response to a question about bodily sensations being experienced in her current experience of calling] [Sigh] Yeah, I don't know how to describe it though. There's a sense of being 'puffed'. I guess it would be pride, when you sense some success; when I sit down with a group of teachers...they all go away feeling satisfied that they've learned something, there's a sense of accomplishment, a sense of pride. It's warm, it's satisfying...like an emotional high. | Experiences bodily sensations of being puffed and warm; experiences an emotional high and a sense of pride in her accomplishments. | Calling brings her warm, 'puffed' bodily sensations and feelings of pride in her accomplishments. |
| 52. | It [the emotional high brought on by accomplishments] carries you through all the low spots... especially with all the funding cutbacks. There's lots of frustration and...anxiety. | Acknowledgement that the emotional highs motivate her to get through the frustration and anxiety inherent in the 'low spots'. | Calling's emotional highs motivate her to continue despite difficulties, frustration and anxiety. |
| 53. | But then those other moments almost give you a sense of elation that gets you through the rough spots. It's almost a bit like being in love. It's an overwhelming sense of elation that will carry you through all the rough things that are going on to be ahead…and a feeling of closeness with the people I work with. And not so much personal closeness but a sense of closeness in the sense that we're all doing the same thing…that we all want the same goal. And when we work together there's an overwhelming sense of togetherness and that feels great. It gives me a sense of joy... So, I think it's those pleasure moments that make me want to continue, that give me the urge to continue with my calling. | Comparison of her experience of calling to that of being in love: sense of elation, joy, closeness, togetherness, community, and joint purpose. | Her calling provides direction, joy, elation, closeness and joint purpose that encourage her to continue despite "rough spots". |

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| 54. | Each plateau I arrive at gives me a sense of accomplishment and I had said that if I die tomorrow I'll look back at my life and say it was a good life and I had a purpose and I did some good things. But if I live to be 90 years old, my wish is that I can look back and say "I really made a difference!" And I guess that's the key word…that I want to make a difference. So, for each plateau, I know that I make little differences; but the ultimate plateau would be to make a difference…the biggest difference. Now, I don't know what that is. Maybe it's only in me; maybe it's, you know, has nothing to do with anybody else but it's this overwhelming sense of need. Yeah. | Experiences strong ambition to make the ultimate difference; each level provides sense of accomplishment but feels compelled to continue to make ever greater contributions. | Accomplishment of each goal compels her to continuously strive to reach the ultimate goal, ambition and overwhelming need to make "the biggest difference." Congruence—calling as life theme. |
| 55. | [In response to "Has your experience of being called changed over the years, and if so, how?"] I don't know if change is maybe the best word for it; it's a process of evolution...you just get better at what you're doing...and one of the reasons I needed to go back and get my Master's is so that other people will recognize that that evolution has occurred...it's a process of change, a process of constantly transforming into a higher level. | Experiences calling as an ongoing, gradual evolution, of getting better at what you do; realization that a Master's is the next step in the process, so others will acknowledge the evolution that she's experienced. | Calling is a continual evolutionary growth process; reason for a Master's is the need to have others acknowledge her own evolution; continuous learning and growth. |
| 56. | It's simply -- my life's work. It's a mission...but for me, I never really thought of it as a calling but now [emphasis] in retrospect, I accept that that's exactly what that is. A calling is a life mission; it's a direction -- the purpose of all your actions. | Experiences calling as her life's work, a mission, direction, and the purpose for all her actions; reflection increased her awareness of calling. | Calling is an all-encompassing life's work, a mission, and the reason for her actions. Congruence—vocation as life theme. |

Table 2
Second Order Thematic Abstraction of Samantha's Experience of Calling

| Thematic Clusters | Generalized Descriptions |
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| 1. Awareness of own giftedness (1,4) | Samantha is aware, from an early age that she is gifted; awareness is reinforced by mother's story of Samantha's unique birth circumstances; she has always known that she was gifted with people, that she had. |
| 2. Early awareness of vocation (1, 2, 4) | Samantha knows, as a "young, young child" that she is a caregiver. Even when young, she was always taking care of children younger than herself. She believes that "all of us are put here for a reason…and there was a reason for everything occurring and there was a plan. She credits her mother for instilling the notion of vocation in her. |
| 3. Strong parental support (1,3) | Samantha's mother believes she bears the signs of a gifted child, having been born the seventh child of the seventh son on the seventeenth day of the seventh month; her mother lovingly retells and reinforces this story throughout her childhood: "I knew I could do anything because she [mother] believed in me"; her mother's love and support are unconditional, whether she agrees with Samantha's decisions or not. |
| 4. Recognition and reinforcement from others (1, 4, 5, 8, 38, 40) | Others recognize Samantha's giftedness; at her birth, the hospital nun remarks "this is a gifted child"; teachers recognize her gift and nominate her a s a potential candidate to work at the local Development Centre for handicapped children; the results of a career assessment tool confirms her strengths and sense of direction; currently, she is recognized by family and friends as a specialist in her field and is frequently consulted even outside of her paid work. |

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| 5. Congruence<br>(4, 7,8, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 27, 28, 41, 44, 47, 48, 54, 56) | Samantha experiences a "knowing" of what she is meant to do: she is a caregiver who has a gift with people; in high school, she experiences a dramatic turning point, an epiphany, a realization of exactly what she is called to do when she sees the positive effect her work has on a handicapped child; knows in advance the results of a vocational assessment tool administered in high school; completion of her B. Ed. Degree results in confusion, contemplation, and ultimately, a clearer, more congruent understanding of her calling: that is, that there are many ways to serve and teaching is just one avenue to fulfill her calling with the handicapped; all of Samantha's experiences inevitably lead her back to her "home base", i.e., her vocation; Samantha worked her way through university with summer jobs that were less lucrative than other options but which were in her field because "I knew that's where I needed to be"; Samantha could die tomorrow knowing that what she has done has made a difference has made a difference; she experiences incongruence between her current job, which is "stifling" her ability to make a substantial difference; calling is her life theme, a force which "drives you through your existence"; others recognize and accept that her work is an integral part of who she is; the impact of calling on her life is huge, affecting every aspect of her life: personal, interpersonal, familial, social, professional, and spiritual; she experiences calling as congruence: "It is my life. I can't imagine who I'd be if I didn't do what I did"; she experiences a merging of the borders between personal and professional; she feels her vocation defines her personality and impacts her positively. Samantha experiences congruence between her vocation and her vision of the future; enhancing her professional credibility through the pursuit of a Master's degree in Special Education will, she hopes, help her better realizes her vision of the future. |
| 6. Perceptions, beliefs, and definitions of calling<br>(2, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 29, 30, 44, 46, 49) | Samantha believes that everyone has a life purpose, a reason for being here; she feels compelled to discover her purpose; she believes that one's calling can be fulfilled in many ways; views calling as integral to personhood, as more than a job; defines calling as inclusive (i.e., it can include many types of work, paid and unpaid, professional and blue collar), rather than the exclusive realm of traditional calling, such as the priesthood or medicine; she believes that because she has experienced both reverence and repulsion, other callings also spark polarized reactions in others; believes calling is an ongoing drive that includes a spiritual element; believes her own sense of calling comes from childhood spirituality nurtured in a Catholic environment that promoted the importance of faith, family, community, and helping others; her mother was instrumental in instilling notion of calling and sense of purpose. |

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| 7. Vocation, not occupation or job<br>(4, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 28, 30, 56) | Samantha's calling is much larger than her job or occupation; she defines herself by using a very broad term, that of caregiver; Samantha realizes that teaching is just one of many ways to access her true calling as caregiver and advocate of the handicapped child: "if I wasn't a teacher, I know I'd be [working with handicapped children] somewhere else…in the community, in their homes and with their families"; she uses various routes to work with them, including sports and recreation; her work is integral to who she is; she feels teaching is not enough: she feels called to make a bigger difference; would work at her vocation whether paid or not; it's not just a job, "it's my life's work." |
| 8. Reactions of others to her calling and their effects on her<br>(1, 3, 21, 22, 23, 24, 35, 36, 39, 41, 42, 43, 47) | Mother's initial and ongoing reaction is support, love, and unconditional belief in her; she experiences negative reactions from high school peers: teasing, taunting, and name-calling; she believes peer pressure resulted from fear of the nature of her work; peers learn to accept her for who she is despite negative reactions to what she does; feels some family resistance and lack of total acceptance of her work; feels that some principals, despite their support of her, are fearful of handicapped children; she is shocked by what she perceives to be coldness and callousness on the part of those who work with the handicapped; friends admire and appreciate her for who she is; feels that family and friends view her as a specialist whom they consult; feels that others have a split, polarized view of her; either reverence or repulsion; Samantha feels that others' reactions to her calling, whether positive of negative, ultimately have positive effects on her because they motivate her to strive harder to achieve her goals; initial negative peer pressure made her defiant, more determined to prove herself and promoted personal growth and maturity; callousness of workers results in her rejection of their "detachment" response; others' view of her as "expert" provokes mixed feelings—although complimentary, it also invokes self-doubt, fear of failure, obligation, and a sense of responsibility for others; principal's negative reaction has a positive effect insofar as she overcomes it and defends her convictions; parents' pride and friends' awe and admiration encourage and motivate her to achieve ever higher goals. |

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| 9. Purpose, drive, vision<br>(11, 17, 19, 28, 30, 47, 48, 50, 52, 53, 54, 56) | Samantha experiences calling as her life's work, as her mission, her purpose, her direction; she feels compelled to make a difference; calling is the defining force of her life that shapes her personality, influences all areas of her life, including relationships, actions, and goals; Samantha feels driven, irrespective of financial gain, to continuously strive to meet higher and higher goals, "towards a goal that I can't even see, it's so high"; when working her way through university, Samantha purposefully chose to "stay in the field [because] I knew that's where I needed to be"; Samantha feels compelled to reach the ultimate goal, to make the "biggest difference"' even negative feelings (e.g. frustration) only serve to strengthen her drive; Samantha believes "it's simply my life's work…it's a mission…the purpose of all your actions"; she feels inevitably and irresistibly drawn to her vocation; "what my calling gives me is a sense of purpose and a sense of community; Samantha has a vision of her future, although she isn't yet sure exactly what it will be; she only knows that, whatever it is, she must make a substantial difference in the lives of the handicapped and their families. |
| 10. Service to others<br>(6, 17, 26, 27, 33, 42, 43, 44, 54) | Samantha feels driven to make big differences in the lives of man, many handicapped children and their families; helping others fosters feelings of gratitude, satisfaction, power, elation, exhilaration, and gratitude; she knows her life has meaning because her work has touched others; as a teen, Samantha voluntarily chose responsibility for helping handicapped children rather than pursue "normal" teen activities; her status as an "expert" is laden with responsibility; feels responsible for others: "I've got people's children in my hands"; service to others is essential to her calling:" if I live to be ninety years old, my wish is that…I really made a difference." |
| 11. Spirituality<br>(14, 15, 31, 48, 49) | Samantha feels deeply and spiritually connected to her work:" it's almost like a religion to me…like a spirituality and that gives us strength"; she believes that the handicapped children and their families have become part of her soul, part of who she is; she regularly experiences calling as a connection with others and the divine; "what my calling gives me is a …sense of hope and faith…a sense of spirituality…a s sense of soul building"; calling engenders strength, purpose, and personal growth. When working with handicapped children, Samantha repeatedly has heightened experiences which she compares to the experience of giving birth and which include a spiritual dimension, "that connection…with whoever put you there." |

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| 12. Vocation as sacrifice<br>(6, 11, 20, 30, 34) | Samantha feels willing to do whatever it takes to pursue her calling; as a teen, she made personal sacrifices and overcame negative peer pressure to pursue volunteer work with handicapped children' she overcame her initial fear of handicapped children to pursue her vocation; she worked her way through university be staying in her field and forgoing more lucrative options' she would work without pay; although she feels she already ahs sufficient knowledge, Samantha is earning a Master's degree to gain credibility need to reach more people. |
| 13. Passion, depth of feeling<br>(26, 31, 32, 33, 53, 54) | Samantha feels deeply about her calling; she describes her feelings with many superlatives; she experiences calling as "an incredible high…an incredible feeling of overwhelming satisfaction and gratitude", similar to an adrenaline rush; she feels intense joy, elation, power, gratitude, satisfaction, and overwhelming emotion; she compares the feeling as skin to that experienced after giving birth—a connectedness to others and the divine, and a rightness of purpose; Samantha feels that these powerful, intense emotions serve to motivate, strengthen, and energize her; she feels an overwhelming need to make "the biggest difference." |
| 14. Peak experiences<br>(7, 31, 32, 33) | While still a high school student, Samantha experienced an epiphany, a revelation about what exactly she was meant to do in life, when her volunteer work with a handicapped child achieved dramatic results: "that was thee moment that changed my life…the power of a five year old child; I knew right then and there what I wanted to do"; currently, she repeatedly has "peak experiences" when working with handicapped children, experiences which she compares to the feelings she had when giving birth, such an "overwhelming sense of being alive," and a divine connection; Samantha feels an adrenaline rush, "like a light, an overwhelming feeling of emotion"; she feels powerful, motivated, and strong: "This is it; this is the moment." |
| 15. Continuous learning and growth<br>(15, 20, 50, 55) | Samantha feels that her calling contributes to positive and continuous personal growth and transformation; she experiences frustration in current job but this fosters continual striving for self-improvement; she views vocation as an evolutionary process, a process of constantly transforming into a higher level; Samantha believes that "with every child I've worked with, I've grown into a better human being." Samantha is continuing to grow academically as well: she is pursuing a Master's degree. |
| 16. Negative feelings invoked by vocation and their effects on her<br>(9, 10, 16, 18, 43, 44, 50) | Samantha experiences many strong negative feelings, including frustration, confusion, uncertainty about how best to make a difference, fear of failure, and self-doubt; her feelings of frustration are exacerbated by anything that gets in the way of doing what she needs to do; her negative feelings serve to push her forward. |

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| 17. Positive feelings invoked by vocation and their effects on her<br>(12, 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 48, 51, 52, 53, 54) | Samantha Experiences many strong positive feelings, including enjoyment, fulfillment, pride, a sense of accomplishment, gratitude, satisfaction, love, a sense of purpose, strength, power, elation, joy, hope, security, spirituality, connectedness to others and the divine, "highs", joint purpose, sense of community, ambition, and a powerful need to make a difference in the lives of others; these positive feelings encourage her to continue through "rough spots" and motivate her to achieve ever higher goals. |

# APPENDIX B

## PRESENTATION OF PAM'S DATA ANALYSIS, IN TABULAR FORM

Contained within this appendix are two tables. Table 3 includes relevant excerpts taken from Pam's transcribed protocol, paraphrases of each excerpt, and first order themes. Table 4 represents the next level of abstraction. It contains clusters of first order themes that comprise second order themes.

Table 3
First Order Thematic Abstraction of Pam's Experience of Calling

| | | Two Levels of Abstraction | |
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| | Excerpts from Transcribed Interview | 1. Paraphrases | 2. First Order Themes |
| 1. | I first wanted to be a vet when I was about 7…I just knew I wanted to be a vet. | Realization that she wanted to be a vet from an early age; experienced a sense of knowing what she wanted to be. | From young age, "just knew" that she wanted to be a veterinarian. |
| 2. | So everything I did in school was geared to be a vet and so all the classes I took in high school were picked so they would get me into the pre-veterinary program. | Recognition that her goal of becoming a vet helped focus her throughout school years; takes all the right pre-requisites for Vet Med. | Goal of Vet Med provides her with a strong focus and assists her in making the right course selections in school. |
| 3. | ...my focus was wrong. I was just jumping a hoop [while in pre-Vet Med at university] to attain my goal so I wasn't really focused on my classes...and I actually did very poorly the first couple of years. I was a terrible student and it was just because I had a bad attitude. I didn't want to be there [in pre-Vet Med]; I wanted to be in Vet Med. | Lack of focus, negative attitude and poor performance in university are the result of feeling stalled and frustrated at not being able to directly pursue her goal. Desire to be in Vet Med is frustrated by "academic hoops". | Feelings of frustration, negativity and impatience at having to "hoop-jump" at university are fueled by strong desire to be directly pursuing goal and result in initial poor performance. Determination. Sense of urgency to be doing what she wants. |
| 4. | And then [I] actually went overseas to work on a farm in New Zealand. I just had to get my brain in the right focus. It was probably the best thing I ever did because working with the livestock, I really enjoyed it a lot and it just sort of reconfirmed for me that that was where I wanted to be, doing something with animals. | Experience of working with animals overseas is very enjoyable and beneficial, and reconfirms goal to work with animals. | Reconfirmation of goal and a clearer focus are gained through work with animals while overseas. |
| 5 | When I first got in it [Vet Med] I was very disappointed in the classes. I didn't like them. I liked the fact I was going to be a vet but I didn't like the actual classes. I didn't like the way a lot of them were taught, but it got progressively better as you get through the years and start doing | Experiences initial disappointment in Vet Med classes but the feeling gradually dissipates as she moves steadily toward her goal through an increased involvement in the medical and surgical aspects of Vet | Initial disillusionment with Vet Med classes dissipates as she gets more opportunity to move toward her goal through medicine, surgery, and more contact with animals |

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| | more towards what you're aiming for. You're doing more with medicine and surgery and with the animals and with the client. | Med and increased involvement with animals and their owners. | and their owners. |
| 6 | I love animals but I really, really enjoy working with people too. And of course, with Veterinary Medicine some people mistakenly get in Vet Med as opposed to medicine because they think that then they don't have to deal with people. But the animals don't book their own appointments and they don't bring themselves down. So if you don't like dealing with people you're not going to enjoy veterinary medicine one bit. | Expresses strong feeling of enjoyment working with people and animals. Recognizes importance of liking to work with both animals and people if one is to be happy practicing Vet Med. | Strong expression of enjoyment in her work with people and animals. Belief that those who don't like working with people will be dissatisfied with Vet Med. |
| 7 | So I decided after I graduated to go work in a small animal practice that had several vets working at it and just get better at that so when I applied to a mixed animal practice [her initial target] I would have more to offer them. But I loved it. | Positive experience working in a small animal practice replaces initial work goal [mixed animal practice] with a new one: work in small animal practice. Realization that she loves small animal practice. | Discovers and even better fit within small animal specialty; Realization that she loves this work. |
| 8. | I loved the small animal end of it because people will let you do more. You know you can do more...you can do more diagnostics, its like being an investigator you know. You go in and the animal is doing whatever it's doing, diarrhea say, so then there are so many things that can cause this so your have to go through the steps to figure it out. | Expresses love for her work with small animals; recognition that she is able to do more in this practice and this satisfies her curiosity and allows her to use her investigative and problem-solving skills. | Realization that another reason she loves small animal practice is that she can do more and is able to use her problem-solving and investigative skills in diagnostics. Intellectual engagement. |
| 9. | And it's really, really rewarding to a) come up with the answer and b) to do something about it and it's rewarding to help the animal and it's also rewarding because the people are so happy because they… have really strong bonds with their pets and they just want you to do whatever you can just to help them out. | Realization that her work is very rewarding for a number of reasons including problem solving and helping animals and their owners; recognition of the strong bond existing between owners and their pets. | Work is very rewarding: she is able to solve problems and help animals and people. Intellectual engagement. Recognition of strong human/animal bonds. |
| 10. | I get emotional attachments to my patients. We get some really nice people in. [has tears in her eyes]. I've got lots of emotions that I can think of since I've been a Vet. | Acknowledges emotional attachments with patients; expression of feelings of attachment, connection, and affection for them. | Experiences strong emotional attachments to her patients as a result of her work as vet. [Tears]. |

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| 11. | And my parents were both really, really supportive with all of us kids, like whatever we wanted to do--they were full of encouragement, like there was never anything you can't do. It was their attitude that you can do anything as long as you put your mind to it and try really hard. | Experienced lots of parental encouragement and support and their conviction that she was capable of anything if she applied herself. | Parents' encouragement and support fostered the conviction that she could do anything if she applied herself. |
| 12. | Well, a lot of determination. [in response to what made her different from the 80% of all kids who want to be veterinarians]. | Expresses belief that her strong determination made her different from other children who wanted to be veterinarians. | Recognition that it was her determination that made her different from other children who once aspired be veterinarians. |
| 13. | We always had pets and we lived on a little non-functional farm that was beside a riding stable. So we used to go and hang out with the horses and ride them when we weren't supposed to and get bucked off [laughs] and go and help. The horses were breaking out all the time and so we would skip school and help them to round them back up and stuff. When I was probably around 7 again we used to go (my mom and dad used to run a scout camp around Saskatoon) and we all would have our little individual cabins that we lived in while we were there. And a shrew or a mole laid her babies at the end of my bed this one time and she took them all away except this one baby--apparently abandoned. So I tried to raise this baby but I didn't have any mouse food so I probably ended up killing it with good intentions. [Laughs]. There were actually a lot of animal stories. There were beavers…and they used to come and bring us these little mud offerings…and it was some sort of thing that beavers do with each other…it was kind of neat. | Fondly reminisces about her childhood adventures with animals and their positive impact on her life; remembers an incident where she tried to save an abandoned animal. | Realizes that animals have played an important part in her childhood; experiences a sense of kinship with animals; expresses fondness for her memories, especially an attempt to save the life of a small animal. |
| 14. | I felt a bond to animals [as a child]. So I knew that I wanted them to be a part of my life and not just pets and not just animal husbandry either. | Expresses a deep connection with animals as a child, a bond that reinforced her desire to work with animals, not just have pets or do animal husbandry. | As a child, experienced a strong bond with animals that strengthened the conviction that she wanted animals to be a significant part of her life and work. |

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| 15. | I mean that was something that when I was doing so poorly in my first year in university, one of my professors that was an advisor of mine suggested that I go into animal husbandry which is just like being a sheep herder or a dairy farmer or something and it was totally not of interest to me. You know for me, the medicine and the surgery is what is mentally stimulating. | Suggestion made by a university advisor to pursue animal husbandry reinforced her interest in Vet Med and the mental challenges it provides. | University advisor's suggestion that she consider animal husbandry reinforced her need for the intellectual challenges provided by Vet Med.; animal husbandry does not meet her intellectual needs. |
| 16. | Part of my problem and too, part of my lack of focus was that I started university when I was 16--so I thought I was pretty brainy stuff and so I didn't try [laughs]. So I thought I could breeze through like I breezed through everything else. And that was the best thing that ever happened to me--to do really poorly. Because it brought my feet back to the ground and helped to bring my focus back to where it needed to be. | Initial belief that she, being very bright and young, could sail through university effortlessly. Recognition that doing poorly was a positive thing insofar as it helped her become more focused and grounded. | Doing poorly at university came as a surprise and served as a wake-up call that helped her regain her focus and was ultimately a very positive thing. |
| 17. | Probably I knew that I wanted to use my mind. That's my biggest asset and you don't really need to use your mind a whole lot for animal husbandry...but I wanted it to be mentally challenging and so I think I knew it would have to be more involved than just being with animals. It would have to be having to think your way through doing things with the animals and that was from day one. I was always a reader and an investigator and wasn't happy just to sit around and not use my head. | Always an investigator and a reader, she realizes that her mind is her greatest asset and would be underutilized in animal husbandry. | Realization that "from day one", she has always needed to use her mind [her "biggest asset"] to solve problems with animals; just being around animals was not enough to satisfy her investigative and intellectual abilities. |
| 18. | Because it was that--my very first year with small animal practice--that was when I really, truly knew that I'd totally made the right choice. Because I just loved it and a lot of it was the people I loved--and the animals. I loved working with them but for my own satisfaction--just being able to work through problems and feel like I was a help to somebody. It was a very satisfying feeling. | Experiences strong confirmation and sense of "rightness" of her choice during first year of small animal practice. Expresses strong feelings--love for the animals and their owners, satisfaction in helping others and in solving problems. | First year working in small animal practice invokes a validation of her choice, a "knowing" that this is right for her. Expression of joy, love for animals and owners and satisfaction in solving problems to help others. |

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| 19. | Yep, [my work] was a help to the animal, help to their owner and a help to me. And I could go through the day because I had done a good job, you know. | Helping others also helps her by invoking a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. | Experiences her calling as service to others (animals and owners) and to self; feels sense of satisfaction knowing she has helped others; reciprocity: helping others helps her. |
| 20. | [Others' reactions to her calling were] Really supportive…when I was thinking I wanted to do it…. And then once I was in university. Actually once I was in Vet Med, a lot of people who knew me and knew my potential they were like "whoa, why don't you be a real Doctor?", you know. [Laughs]. | Initially experiences peer support but later, when in Vet Med, she experiences skepticism and derision about her calling to Vet Med. | Peers' initial support is replaced by derision and skepticism about her choice. "Why don't you be a real doctor?" |
| 21. | And that's one thing about Vet Med--it doesn't, you know, you don't get the same kind of respect as you do for being an MD or a dentist or someone in the human field and you certainly don't make the money. And that's fine....most vets go in open minded to that and so they're not in it to make a killing because they're not going to. | Acknowledges that Vet Med is not as prestigious or as lucrative as some other medical professions but accepts that. | Feels secure in her choice of Vet Med despite its being less lucrative and prestigious. |
| 22. | So it, at first, before getting in [to Vet Med], it was all very supportive, my teachers were supportive, my family were supportive, all except the one fellow who thought I should try animal husbandry. [Laughs]. | Initially experiences strong support from all others of her intentions to pursue Vet Med with the exception of the professor who suggested animal husbandry instead. | Initially feels supported by all others in her choice to pursue Vet Med, except for the professor who suggested animal husbandry. |
| 23. | Yeah, but after I actually got in [to Veterinary Medicine], it was probably because most of the people that I was running with and associating with were like "wow--you know you'll make way more money doing this [human medicine]--so why don't you go into that? People will respect you more and you'll be using your brains better. Why don't you go into that?" But I've never regretted going into veterinary medicine as opposed to human medicine. No regrets. Oh no. | Despite peers' urging that she consider Medicine because it was more lucrative and prestigious, she never floundered in her decision to pursue Vet Med. Solid conviction; no regrets. | Feels secure in her choice to pursue Vet Med despite her peers' urgings to consider Medicine and its lucrative and prestigious advantages. Feels no regrets, only conviction. |

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| 24. | It [her peers' comments] was kind of irritating sometimes [laughs] but it didn't deter me. No. I did consider applying to medical school just in case I didn't get into veterinary medicine. And because the competition is harder to get into Vet Med so I did consider applying for an MD but it was just as a backup in case I didn't make it. No, I don't think it deterred me at all. | Peers' comments irritate but do not sway her. Considers medical school as a contingency plan only. | Steadfastness in her direction despite irritating comments of peers; Medicine considered but only as a contingency. |
| 25. | But I think that the fellow [professor] that said to go into animal husbandry motivated me [laughs]. Made me try a bit harder. | Experiences a positive and motivating impact despite a professor's comment that she pursue animal husbandry instead of Vet Med. | Is motivated to work harder when a professor suggests that she lower her career aspirations and pursue animal husbandry instead. |
| 26. | [Her response to others' reactions]: It probably encouraged me to keep on going with it…I was going to say that it wouldn't have made a huge difference if anybody would have been discouraging because typically I'm not easily discouraged…So I would've gone ahead and done it, anyways. | Realization that others' negative reactions would likely have failed to discourage her from pursuing Vet Med. | Is strong in her focus and direction despite some negative reactions; knows others would not be able to discourage her from pursuing Vet Med. |
| 27. | The effect of following my calling means that I'm very happy in what I do and so that has a huge effect because it makes me healthier--it just makes me healthier person. Because I'm happy and ...it makes my marriage easier because I'm not coming home with a whole pile of stress that I'm unloading on anybody. Because I love it , I don't have to run from it; I don't feel like I'm shackled to the job; I don't feel like I have to go to work because I have to pay the bills. I go to work because I like going to work and because it's something I really want to do. | Realization that her calling has had a huge positive impact on her life: it has made her healthier, happier, gives her enjoyment and fulfillment and has a positive impact on her marriage. It gives her the freedom to work because she wants to, not because she has to. | Impact of her calling on her life is huge and positive; experiences health, happiness, fulfillment, less stress, a better marriage, a sense of freedom and a love for her work; is happier, healthier and fulfilled. Chooses to work because she loves what she does. |
| 28. | …It was a very good thing to set up my own place [small animal practice] because now I can set my own hours and my family is my number one priority and I can do that and my business is right on the heels and is my second priority and I can balance the two of them and I can feel I can | Realization that working for herself is ideal—it allows her to balance home/family priorities with work priorities. | Appreciates the opportunity for self-employment that Vet. Med provides; enjoys the freedom and life balance her own practice provides. |

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| | do both. | | |
| 29. | Oh, the people I've met are wonderful people--I've met tons and tons of wonderful people. Just wonderful. The other vets and technical staff are really kind-hearted people; they are just the kind of people that are drawn to the profession. And the clients, most of the clients tend to be great. And you make great friends with clients and each time they come in you just end up talking about different things and you kind of get to know about them...So it's had a really big impact in terms of just the kind of people I find myself involved with. It's an ongoing relationship…and there are people who move out of town and we still write each other. | Experiences her calling's positive impact on her work and social relationships. Enjoys and appreciates the ongoing relationships and friendships she develops with co-workers and clients. Feels her colleagues are kind—typical of those drawn to the field. | Feels strong connection and develops ongoing friendships with "wonderful" clients and "kind" co-workers. Acknowledges the big impact this has on her work and social life. Congruency between self and clients, and between self and colleagues. |
| 30. | Where the crossover comes is I've made social relationships as a result of work. And when I'm out with those people its not veterinarian related but friendship related so, in that respect, there is a spillover. It's not really a ...its more like a bonus. I make more friends because of what I do. | Recognizes the positive impact her work has on her social life; views the friendships she develops as a bonus, a positive spillover from her work. | Her calling positively impacts her social life; feels friendships she develops are a bonus of her work. |
| 31. | Sometimes it's a nuisance. I never tell people what I do at parties; if they ask, then I'll tell them and then you're stuck with animal stories for the next two hours and it's sometimes fun but sometimes it's....I don't want to talk about animals all the time. [Laughs]. | Acknowledges one negative impact of calling on her life: annoyance with people who, in social situations, discover what she does and then want to talk for hours about animals. | Negative impact: annoyance with people wanting to talk with her exclusively about animals; wants balance. |
| 32. | Essentially, I'm teaching people all afternoon. Mornings, I do surgeries. Afternoons, it's appointments and it's a lot of client education that goes on with each patient that comes in. So, as a result of that, it's probably helped me a little bit with my social life as well because I've taught ballroom dancing… | Educating her clients is an important part of her work. Teaching others has helped her social life—she teaches ballroom dancing. | Her work has had positive effects on her social life; she is able to transfer her teaching skills developed at work to teaching ballroom dancing in her social life. |
| 33. | Because that's another thing I've been doing which is a real positive thing which is acupuncture for Vet Med...so I'm doing that and I'll start a chiropractic course for vets in May as well and that's been a real positive thing too because that brings out a | Recognizes the positive benefits of expanding her practice offerings to include acupuncture and chiropractic: enjoyment of the new type of client it attracts and the new | Excitement over the positive benefits of moving into new service areas [acupuncture and chiropractic] that attract new type of |

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| | whole new type of client and a totally different atmosphere in the room when you are doing acupuncture. | atmosphere it creates. | client and create a different atmosphere. |
| 34. | It's so much more comfortable and comforting and homey kind of an atmosphere when you are doing that kind of work [acupuncture] with their pets. And the people that do that, they tend to be very open and receptive ...and I think I've enjoyed Veterinary Medicine even more...if that's possible...since I started doing the acupuncture… | Discovery that acupuncture heightens her enjoyment of Vet Med even more; the atmosphere it creates is more comfortable, comforting, and homey, and the clients are open and receptive. | Acupuncture, the clients it attracts and the atmosphere it creates, provides even greater satisfaction in her calling, "if that's possible"; congruence with work. |
| 35. | Yeah, that is because even apart from the acupuncture we always have to go off for continuing education (CE)…and you always get pumped. It doesn't matter what CE you do, you come back in and you are hyped up to try all these new and cool things that are out there and you are going to save even more patients and it's just different and it's exciting because it's different and you go away and get away which is always good and so that's a big positive impact too… | Expression of enthusiasm and excitement ["pumped"] for all new learning opportunities; eager anticipation of applying new knowledge to save more patients. | Feels enthusiastic, eager and excited about opportunities to learn more and apply that to saving lives of animals; commitment to continuous learning that benefits her clients.. |
| 36. | Saving lives. Oh yeah. I save lives and I save and prolong life and that's the good thing…and that [euthanasia] is still a form of saving because it's saving the pet from having to endure. But what's more gratifying is to save their life [laughs] and have them live and be happy and comfortable. | Recognizes the value and gratification of saving and extending life. Views euthanasia as form of saving too. | "I save lives and prolong life"; she recognizes the value of her work; Feels gratified when saving and extending lives of animals. |
| 37. | Sometimes there are better approaches [than the western approach to Vet Med] and that is very gratifying. I use that word a lot because I find this whole field gratifying. Doing the acupuncture is a wonderful thing to do; the effects you can get from it are just incredible ... It's amazing. | Finds considerable gratification in her calling and especially likes doing acupuncture and achieving wonderful, incredible, and amazing effects. | Vet Med, especially the acupuncture, is very gratifying and wonderful. Fascination with doing acupuncture and its incredible and amazing effects. |
| 38. | And so it gives me a lot of pleasure to do things to get these guys [animal patients] off some of the drugs they are on. With that [acupuncture]and the chiropractic that I'm starting in May...the emotional feeling I get from it is real excitement. | Experiences pleasure and excitement at using acupuncture, and later, chiropractic, to get animals off drugs. | Feels pleasure and excitement when able to help animals through use of acupuncture. |

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| 39. | So we can do western and eastern here and we can offer the best of both worlds. And that is exciting but it's also a calming thing...that doesn't make sense, but it makes me very comfortable with what I do and what I can offer to my clients. | Offering both western and eastern [holistic] practices provides greater comfort in her client offerings and is and interesting paradox that is both exciting and calming. | "I am paradoxically both excited and comforted to offer my clients the best of both western and eastern medicine." Congruence and balance. |
| 40. | You feel nurturing with the holistic... more than I do with the regular western medicine...which is interesting…I've never had that [nurturing feeling] despite the fact that I love doing the regular medicine. Right off the bat [when first practicing], I never had the same kind of mothering and nurturing feeling that I do now. And I get a lot more of it from the alternative side rather than the western side and so it's probably even another benefit. So I think that's a healthy thing; it promotes a nice healthy hormonal balance [laughs]. It brings out all the right semitone levels in your body. | Recognizes the benefits [balance, health] of practicing holistic medicine: it brings out a nurturing, mothering feeling not experienced when practicing western medicine. | Despite love of practicing regular western medicine, discovers a new feeling when practicing alternative medicine, i.e., a nurturing, mothering feeling: experiences . Recognizes the benefits of this nurturing feeling: health, balance, and congruence. |
| 41. | Nurturing…and towards the clients too, it's really bizarre [laughs]. We get a closeness with the client; I think they feel more involved somehow with the holistic end of things. I think with the western approach… they [clients] don't feel as much in control. | Feels closer and strangely nurturing towards the clients [pet owners] and not just their pets. Holistic methods promote greater client involvement and sense of control than does western medicine. | Expresses a nurturing feeling toward patients, and strangely, toward their owners as well [when practicing holistic medicine]. Feels greater closeness with clients—they are more involved. |
| 42. | And, uh, I think it's just different feeling and it makes me love Vet Med all over again because it's all new again because I'm learning all new things. And so that's kind of fun too. | Holistic practice is "new" and fun to learn and reinforces and renews her love of her calling. | Learning new practice approach[holistic] is fun and exciting and reinforces her love for Vet Med. Good fit between self and work; intellectual challenge. |
| 43. | [In response to question "Can you talk more about nurturing?"]: Yeah it's [pause, tears in eyes]...I think I...love may be too strong a word, for some of the clients it's not [too strong a word]; for some of the patients [animals] and clients [pet owners]it's | Experiences "nurturing" as love for some animals and their owners, caring, motherly and "hands-on", collaborative treatment where animals are subjects, not objects [context: | Expresses love for animals and owners; feels maternal and nurturing and when practicing holistic medicine—with and for patient-- more |

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| | not but as a general word it's too strong but...it's...um…motherly, so it's more caring and more hands-on; it's more like you're doing things with the animals and for the animals rather than to the animals. | alternative medicine]. | "hands-on." |
| 44. | You should see the animals that come in for the alternative stuff! The animals that used to tremble and quake when they have to come to the vet now come in and they're happy to come because they come for their acupuncture appointment. It makes me feel really good. Otherwise you've got your regular clients that come in and they're always terrified of the vet and they always try and bite the vet…and then they are happy to come and they're happy to hang out here. It's a nice feeling too. Yeah, it must be. Yeah. | Expression of happiness, amazement and sense of satisfaction when seeing the positive effects of acupuncture on pets previously terrified of treatment. | Feels satisfied, happy, and somewhat amazed by animals' positive response to her acupuncture treatments. |
| 45. | I'm sure it [my experience of calling] has [changed] and it's probably a maturity thing than when I [first]felt called to it. I probably didn't know why. I just liked animals and I thought being a vet would be a nifty thing to do. Um, but now I know what it is and I know what I love about it so that's what makes me want to do it. | Speculates about how her experience of calling has changed. Initially, she was attracted to it but didn't know the reasons why. Now, probably because she has matured and has experienced it [calling], she knows she loves it and feels motivated. | Gains more insight into her experience of calling as she matures; now knows she loves it and this motivates her; congruence of fit between her and her work. |
| 46. | ...I love what I do… anything I did would probably be some type of healing related thing. I think that's my biggest calling...it's healing at this point [current situation] and um I could see in the future moving on to holistic approaches for people at some distant time. So I think in that respect my calling has probably changed to encompass more, more than just dealing with animals. So it moved from dealing from just being with animals to healing animals to now to healing--- period. .. It's broadened. | Recognizes the evolution of her calling and realizes that her calling is broader than her occupation and is that of healer. Sees herself eventually moving beyond holistic animal healing to include people. | Her experience of calling has grown from defining herself as "veterinarian" to encompass broader term—healer—of both animals and people. |
| 47. | I think I'm probably as passionate as I found I was after the first year out [of Vet Med school]. That was when I became really passionate. I was like, "Oh, this is wonderful; I love this; this is it for me!". That hasn't | Currently remains as passionate about her calling as when she first graduated. Recalls feelings of love, joy, and excitement and knowing this was right for | Feels as passionate and as excited about Vet med as ever. "Oh, this is wonderful; I love this; this is it for me!" |

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| | changed. | her. These feelings remain today. | Affirmation of vocation. |
| 48. | I love what I do. No question. Lots of people hate what they do but I love coming to work. The people I work with are great so that's a huge part… | Loves what she does and the people she works with. Realizes that others hate their work. | Unlike many others, Pam loves her work and colleagues; love and congruence. |
| 49. | And I look forward to coming to work every day here. It's because I love what I do and always did so it's not like I have to worry about going and dealing with so and so and whatever. | Happily anticipates going to work every day—loves what she does. | Looks forward to work—loves what she does; congruence. |
| 50. | I feel lucky to have hit on it, to know what it was because I think that there are so many people out there—that they've got a niche but they just haven't found it; like Peter [husband]…there is a place …for him and for people like him but I feel lucky for me inside. For them, when they don't know what it is and…go through life…get stuck in a rut…have to pay the bills…so they don't feel they can stop and have to go on looking for what it is to make them happy. | Feels very fortunate to have her calling; believes others, like her husband, have a "niche" and feels empathy for those who have not found it—they must continue searching for what makes them happy. | Congruence; feels lucky to have her calling and feels badly for others, like her husband, who have not found theirs. Feels everyone has a "niche." |
| 51. | My spirituality…it's like the essence of me; it's the core; it's more than my personality; it's more than my ethics and morals; it's the root of my being…for some parts of it, it [vocation] is…that part [business owner part] is not my calling;. But. the healing part of it [being a vet] is part of that. | Defines spirituality as core to who she is; the healing aspects of her calling are included in that but not the business owner aspects of it. | Identifies the healing aspects of being a veterinarian as spiritual. Defines spirituality as core to who she is. |
| 52. | And that's [the business owner part of being a vet] not an innate drive…for some people it is, but it's not an innate drive for me. | Excludes business owner from her view of her calling because it is not innate; recognizes that for some people, that innate drive for business would be their calling. | Implies that vocation involves innate drives. Knows that he business end of being a vet is not innate and therefore not part of her vocation. |
| 53. | …the healing part of it; if I have an animal that's…really, really ill or if they're afraid…if I do something that makes them feel more comfortable on either an emotional level or a physical level, that does touch me, really, really deeply. | Expression of strong connection with animals, especially if they are ill or afraid; feels deeply touched when she is able to comfort them on emotional or physical levels. | Expression of intense feelings when able to comfort an ill or frightened animal. "That does touch me, really, really deeply". |

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| 54. | ...whatever little creature is in there [examination room] is really petrified, when I touch them, they can feel, um, (the more I think about it, the more it is a spiritual thing), they can feel my intent and I can feel their worry and there's a king of transfer of emotions that happens and they calm down | Empathy for frightened animals; feels emotionally connected and is able to calm them down by touching them and somehow transferring her intent to them; recognizes that this a spiritual thing. | Empathy for frightened "little creatures". Recognizes the spirituality involved in her work; is able to heal and calm animals through touch and the transfer of her intent to help. |
| 55. | [when treating animals] it's a warm physical sensation that I'll feel, usually in my chest; it's a good physical sensation. | Experiences a warm physical feeling in her chest when treating animals. | Has a positive physical response to treating animals [warm feeling in the chest]. |
| 56. | With some people [I feel the same emotional connection but more with the animals]...just because of the dialogue that you have with the owners, you don't have to go that deeply to do your communicating. | Feels a deeper connection with the animals than with the owner because she can use dialogue to communicate; with animals, she uses other, deeper ways to communicate. | Deeper connection with animals than with people--her communication method is a deeper one than the dialogue used by people. |
| 57. | Not in the routine, ordinary kind of stuff [but]...if they're sick, let's say a cat who's just delivered [kittens], and they just feel crummy...you just take a damp face cloth and you just wipe them down like a mother cat licking them and they just [calm down]...those are the kinds of situations where I'll feel it [warm physical sensation] mostly. | Routine aspects of her work do not invoke the warm feeling in her chest; rather, it occurs when she is treating a sick animal that she is able to help; nurturing of animal by touching it as its own mother would. | Warm physical sensation is experienced when helping animals but not in routine activities; nurtures and touches animals in way their mother would. |
| 58. | It [dog who had just undergone surgery] seemed to be doing fine and then it was having a seizure...and it takes time to get treatment ready, so in the meantime, I was just doing reiki on the dog...and the dog came out of its seizure and it looked up at me and just wagged its' tail and went back to sleep...It was more the emotional response of the dog...more than coming out of the seizure...that really touched me. | Recalls a particularly satisfying event where she is touched by the emotional response of a dog whom she had treated using an alternative healing technique called reiki. [Note: the word reiki means "God energy"]. | Strong emotional connection with dog she assisted using reiki, an alternative healing method. Spiritual connotation of word, reiki: God energy. |
| 59. | I don't consider that I make sacrifices. If I chose to, I could. Some vets work themselves like dogs....they don't see their kids grow up because they work all the time. | Doesn't consider herself to make sacrifices for her vocation but knows she could choose to; knows other vets who work too much. | Chooses not to work all the time, despite the working patterns of some other vets who miss out on seeing their children |

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| | | | grow up. |
| 60. | Most people are surprised when they hear I'm a veterinarian…because they perceive that I'm not serious enough to be a vet…I come across as quite goofy on a social basis [laughs]…but they always seem very surprised and impressed that "Oh wow, you're an vet; that's cool." | People she meets socially react with surprise when they find out she's a vet. She thinks it's because she's "goofy." Others are also impressed. | People she meets in social situations are impressed and surprised when they find that she's a vet.; surmises that the surprise comes from her acting "goofy." |
| 61. | One thing that is a draining thing is the euthanasia…but it's mostly draining because of the clients. I can barely leave a euthanasia [case] dry-eyed anymore [tears in eyes]. And I go back and cry after they're gone…it surprises me a little; I thought I'd get a little hardened to it but no, no. | Experiences animal euthanasia as very draining; feels empathy for clients [owners] and cries after they leave; surprised she hasn't "hardened." | Strong empathy for owners of pets who are euthanised; cries after they leave; surprised that she hasn't "hardened" to it. |
| 62. | Everything else [about Vet. Med.] is positive, and even with the euthanasia, it's often a kindness. And I'm more sad for the people than for the animal because they're left behind and are going to miss them. | Considers euthanasia a kindness; empathy for owners who will miss their pets. | Euthanasia is a kindness. Empathy for owners who will miss their pets. |
| 63. | No, I don't get that intense [when comparing herself to another co-researcher who described emotional highs comparable to giving birth]. With me, it's more a feeling of overall contentment and comfort…My life, whether home or work, most aspects, leave me with feelings of contentment, happiness, more of a laid-back emotional state. It's not the adrenaline rushing kind of stuff. It's more of a "yoga thing" than what the other person had. | Experiences feelings of contentment and happiness in relation to her calling; experiences a "yoga thing", not the rush of adrenaline described by another co0-researcher. | Feelings of contentment and happiness, not the highs of another's experience of calling; hers is a "yoga thing." |
| 64. | Yeah. I receive it back. It feeds me and sustains me. I just kind of float along in this little cloud of happiness—which is just fine by me. | Her calling gives back to her; it brings happiness and sustains her. | "It [vocation] feeds and sustains me." I am happy. |
| 65. | I used to talk about that with my Dad. You're better off to love what you do and make less money than make more money and hate what you do and be miserable forever and get all the health problems that come along with that misery. | Expression of opinion about her perspective on vocation: do what you love and avoid all the misery and related health problems. | Believes it is better to do what you love even if there are more lucrative options. Being miserable in your work will make you sick. |

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| 66. | Anybody [parents, husband, friends] that was supportive before [becoming a vet] is still supportive and very happy for me. | Experiences ongoing support of her from parents, husband and friends.. | Ongoing support of her from significant others. |
| 67. | I anticipate being a healer forever, whether with animals or doing acupuncture or reflexology out of my home. I can see myself teaching the Animal Health Technology program at NAIT. After that, in my retirement, doing acupuncture or reflexology out of my home. I see myself retiring from this particular clinic but never from the whole practice of healing. | Vision of future is consistent with her vocation as healer; sees herself teaching others and/or doing alternative forms of healing from her home when she retires from the clinic. Healing is her lifelong vocation. | Knows she will be a healer forever, throughout her entire life, although it may take different forms, such as teaching at NAIT or doing alternative medicine out of her home. Healing is a lifelong theme from which she will never retire. |

Table 2
Second Order Thematic Abstraction of Pam's Experience of Calling

| Thematic Clusters | Generalized Descriptions |
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| 1. Awareness of own gifts<br>(13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 54, 56) | Pam expresses a special bond with animals through fond recollections of childhood adventure; communicates with animals on a very deep level: "they can feel my intent [to heal] and I can feel their worry"; she knows "from day one" that he mind is her "biggest asset" and that she needs to use it to investigate and solve problems to help animals and their owners; has always been a "reader and an investigator"; enters university at the age of 16 as "pretty brainy stuff"; finds medicine and surgical aspects of veterinary medicine mentally stimulating. |
| 2. Early awareness of vocation<br>(1, 14) | Pam is aware, from the early age of seven, that she wanted to be a veterinarian; as a child, she felt a strong kinship with animals that strengthened her conviction to make animals a large part of her life. |
| 3. Strong parental support<br>(11, 65, 66) | Pam experiences plenty of encouragement from her parents—"like there was never anything you can't do"; their support is ongoing and continuous; conversations with father reinforced belief that it's better to love what you do regardless of the money. |
| 4. Recognition and reinforcement from others<br>(11, 20, 23) | Pam experiences unconditional parental support that fostered the conviction that she was capable of virtually anything she set her mind to; teachers and peers are also aware of her intellectual gifts; later, in university, her peer group believes she should pursue human medicine instead. |
| 5. Perceptions, beliefs, and definitions of vocation<br>(11, 48, 49, 50, 52) | Pam defines calling as a "niche"; she believes everyone has a calling but not everyone is able to find it; she feels badly for those who have not found it and she feels lucky to have hit on it herself; her parents instilled in her the belief that she was capable of anything; knows that the business end of her practice is not part of her calling because it's not innate; by implication, she is suggesting that calling is innate. |

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| 6. Congruence<br>(2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 19, 23, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, 42, 47, 49, 50, 52, 63, 64, 67) | Pam's calling has a huge, pervasive, and unifying effect on her life; it fuels happiness, determination, motivation, purpose, drive, passion, love, excitement, joy, comfort, enthusiasm, and eagerness; she experiences a solid fit between her gifts and the challenges of veterinary medicine; is able to help animals and owners by applying her intellectual abilities with her love of animals; her calling provides a strong focus in high school and at university; she has such a strong sense of "knowing" what she needs to be that she experiences frustration with what she considers "hoop-jumping" at university; despite more prestige and earning potential offered by human medicine, Pam has never regretted her choice. Pam's vocation overlaps with other aspects of life: it has improved virtually every other aspect of her life, from her marriage, family life, social life, health, and sense of well-being and balance; her calling fosters a sense of freedom and provides opportunities for self-employment and continuous learning; a positive work experience results in even stronger focus, i.e., small animal practice; she experiences a blending of boundaries between work and social life: believes vocation is innate and therefore congruent with one's self; vocation "feeds and sustains" her; experiences a strong sense of congruence, contentment and happiness. Her vision of her future is congruent with her present insofar as she plans to be a healer forever. |
| 7. Vocation, not occupation or job<br>(36, 42, 46, 67) | Pam thinks of her vocation in very broad terms; she defines herself not simply by the occupational term, veterinarian, but rather as a healer: "I save lives." She may retire from her current practice but will never retire from healing. She plans to expand in future to healing people as well. |
| 8. Reactions of others to her calling and their effects on her<br>(11, 12, 20, 22, 23, 26, 60, 66) | Parents, teachers, and peers are all supportive' later, when in Veterinary Medicine, Pam experiences less support from her peers who make derogatory remarks: "whoa, why don't you be a real doctor." When she was not doing as well at university, one professor suggests she pursue animal husbandry instead—this provides a "wake-up call" and makes her work harder. Others' reactions, whether positive or negative, serve to motivate and encourage her; she remains confident in her vocation and has never had any regrets; experiences a sense of conviction that this is right for her; support of significant others is ongoing; currently, those who meet her are both surprised and impressed that she is a veterinarian. |
| 9. Purpose, drive, vision<br>(1, 2, 3, 15, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 36, 46) | Pam's calling gives her a strong sense of purpose and direction; it motivates her to overcome obstacle, such as "hoop-jumping through courses she considered irrelevant to her ultimate goal; she has a strong sense of her own priorities, remains steadfast in the midst of peer influence, and feels secure in her choice despite more lucrative options; her ongoing vision of herself is that of healer. |

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| 10. Service to others<br>(9, 19, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44) | Pam finds great reward in helping animas and their owners; she achieves a great sense of satisfaction while solving medical problems; continuous learning enables her to "save even more patients"; she feels excited and pleased when her use of alternative medical treatments result in getting animals off drugs and increases their comfort levels; she nurtures others through her practice, especially when using eastern medicine—she likes the way it relaxes the animal and owner and gives the owners more control over an otherwise frightening process. |
| 11. Spirituality<br>(40, 41, 43, 44, 48, 51, 53, 54, 58) | Pam experiences a strong nurturing, "mothering" feeling, especially when practicing holistic medicine; she expresses love for and has nurturing feelings for not only her animal patients, but for their masters as well: "It's really bizarre." She is deeply touched by sick and frightened animals and has strong emotional connection with them; she uses *reiki,* a holistic healing method to treat animals (*Reiki* means *God energy*). |
| 12. Passion, depth of feeling<br>(7, 10, 12, 18, 35, 37, 40, 41, 43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 53, 56, 57, 58) | Pam expresses strong feelings toward her vocation: love, passion, determination, happiness, contentment, fulfillment, peace, balance; she has strong emotional attachments to animas and their owners; her fierce determination sets her apart from all the other children who had wanted to be veterinarians; Pam repeats words that emphasize her feelings: words like love, really, satisfying, help, gratifying, etc.; she gets "hyped" and excited when learning new things that allow her to save more lives; she loves going to work each and every day; experiences warm physical sensation in her chest when treating animals. |
| 13. Health and well-being<br>(27, 28, 31, 40, 59, 63, 65) | Being content in her vocation makes Pam healthier; owning her won small animal practice allows her to better balance home and work lives; she seeks balance in her social life; the practice of holistic medicine promotes nurturing feelings and "that's a healthy thing"; she chooses to work a reasonable number of hours; doing work she loves leads to less stress, good health, happiness, and contentment. |
| 14. Continuous learning and growth<br>(35, 40, 42, 45, 46, 54, 58) | Continuing education is exciting for Pam; it reconfirms her passion for her vocation; she gets "pumped", excited, and "hyped" when able to apply what she's learned in Continuing Education courses; she can't wait to get back and try out new techniques so she can save even more lives. Pam has grown and expanded her knowledge and perspective since moving into holistic treatment methods; she feels more nurturing, motherly, and loving since embarking on eastern approaches; she is now able to connect on an even deeper, more spiritual level as a result; she has broadened her view of what she is, that is, she is not just a veterinarian, but has grown to become a healer. |

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| 15. Negative feelings invoked by vocation and their effects<br>(3, 5, 20, 24, 61) | Pam experiences frustration when having to "jump hoops" in pre veterinary medicine; later, when in veterinary medicine, she is again disappointed with classes; she experiences some irritation with and derision from classmates who think she should go into "real medicine; she doesn't let their attitude get to her and continues regardless; performing euthanasia is very draining. Despite a few negative feelings, their effects are generally positive. |
| 16. Positive feelings invoked by vocation and their effects<br>(6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 18, 34, 35, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 48, 49, 50, 53, 62, 63) | Pam experiences primarily positive feelings as a result of her vocation; she loves animals and their owners; she loves the opportunity to use her intellectual, investigative, and problem-solving gifts; she discovers she loves small animal practice; she finds he vocation very rewarding, satisfying, gratifying, comfortable, and comforting, exciting, challenging, and fun; holistic medicine is even more rewarding and allows her to do more hands-on work and less intrusive techniques; she feels nurturing and motherly with both animals and their masters; loves going to work; she feels lucky and fortunate to have her calling; she has feelings of peace, happiness, health and balance, akin to "floating along on this little cloud of happiness." |

# APPENDIX C

## PRESENTATION OF ROCHESTER'S DATA ANALYSIS, IN TABULAR FORM

Contained within this appendix are two tables. Table 5 includes relevant excerpts taken from Rochester's transcribed protocol, paraphrases of each excerpt, and first order themes. Table 6 represents the next level of abstraction. It contains clusters of first order themes that comprise second order themes.

Table 5
First Order Thematic Abstraction of Rochester's Experience of Calling

| | | Two Levels of Abstraction | |
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| | Excerpts from Transcribed Interview | 1. Paraphrases | 2. First Order Themes |
| 1. | And they'd [parents] buy me [musical] instruments. When I was five I had a drum set, a guitar and bass, all these sorts of instruments…as soon as I picked them up, it was natural. | Parents would buy musical instruments; by age five, he had several; playing them came naturally. | Experienced support from parents who would buy him instruments; playing music was natural. |
| 2 | I used to fall asleep when my dad was practicing, inside his drummer's bass drum so...it was great--right inside of it [laugh]..it was crazy. I'd sleep through rehearsals and I think some of it was sort of like osmosis. I developed that through just being there a lot and listening. | Remembers as a child falling asleep amidst father's drums and rehearsals; speculates that he may have absorbed music "by osmosis" | Recollection of early memories of music, particularly falling asleep amidst father's drum set and rehearsals; absorption through "osmosis". |
| 3. | I'd always look through records and my parents' eight-tracks or whatever and before I could remember words, or say anything except "Mom" and "Dad", I was listing off records that were part of our collection and stuff like that. | Recollects early memories of being able to list off names of parents' record collection despite a vocabulary otherwise limited to "Mom" and "Dad". | Very early memories of the significance of music demonstrated by ability to name off records' names despite a vocabulary limited to "Mom" and 'Dad". |
| 4. | [In response to a question about when he had his first conscious memory of knowing music was for him]…grade two. I started forming my own bands out of friends…Yeah I'd have all the instruments and I'd call all my friends and pretend we were the Beatles or something like that. And I'd teach them to play and try to get somewhere. | First conscious memory of knowing music was for him was in grade two when he started organizing his own bands and teaching his friends to play instruments. | Early awareness of music being for him--started forming bands in Grade two. |
| 5. | [In response to question about whether he took music lessons] No. It was just really, really natural. | Never took music lessons; music came naturally. | Natural musical ability—never took music lessons. |
| 6. | [In response to emotions experienced when first playing music] …a sense of self-satisfaction, accomplishment…Yeah. It was elating…Being able to play along with records and sort of...vicariously | When first playing music and playing along with records, experienced feelings of satisfaction, elation, accomplishment and a sense of living vicariously | Early memories of elation, satisfaction, accomplishment, and living vicariously through music of others. |

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| | be living through the music-that I'd vicariously be playing along with musicians. | through the music of others. | |
| 7. | I'd play [along with] records and that would give me the sense of what it would be like to play in front of real people and bring that kind of joy to people…it was a reciprocal thing...imagining what it would be like. | Experienced joy when playing along with records and imagining the joy he would bring playing in front of real people. | Playing along with records provoked positive images of himself playing to real audiences and bringing joy to them. The joy is reciprocal. |
| 8. | No, [never fantasized about being anything else] it was always rock star. My mother has this book of all my report cards and pictures and what I wanted to be that year. And it was always rock star. A few years I put fireman or policeman just to be normal. | Remembers never wanting to be anything but a rock star as a child; for a few years entered "fireman" or "policeman" in mother's memory book to appear "normal". | Remembers always wanting to be a rock star; to appear "normal" he occasionally entered other occupations in mother's book of school memories. |
| 9. | [Experience of forming bands and performing] Lots of stomach aches…Nerves. Dreams where I 'd do a lot of things in my sleep. Like before an important talent show or something like that I 'd get up [in his sleep] and talk about things that pertained to it.<br>Like...say we were setting up in Grade nine a "p.a" system to do the thing and I'd have a sleepover and I'd reach over to my friend who was sleeping over and twiddle the knobs on his shirt like they were the controls on a mixing board.<br>I'd say "we can bring down the bass here" or something like that in my sleep so a lot of physical stuff coming over. | Experiences nervousness, stomachaches and dreams in response to forming bands and performing when younger. Dreams manifested themselves in physical actions acted out while sleeping. | Nervousness, stomachaches, and dreams in response to forming bands and performing when younger. |
| 10. | Slow motion dreams...a lot of ideas coming from it…<br>Songs, yeah [ideas for songs] and visual sort of things that might be in a performance. | Experienced slow motion dreams that elicited new ideas for songs and visual ideas for performances. | Inspiration for new songs and visual ideas for performances emerge in "slow motion" dreams. |
| 11. | Grade four [when he started writing songs]. Yeah. [smiles]. It was cool. It was good. It's funny when you look back on it. But, I'd get my Dad to play on it and then I'd find a friend at school who could sing and then I'd play the drums; it felt cool because it sounded good….It would give me a | Began writing songs in Grade four and then would get father and friends to perform them. Recalls good feelings and a sense that he may have a future in music. | Parental support through father's participation in band. Writing and performing own songs feels good and fuels hope for a future in music. |

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| | sense that it [his music] would go somewhere. | | |
| 12. | I'm always really hard on myself that way...where everything is kind of looked at like it's nothing...it's just natural. | Undervalues his talent because it's so natural to him. Is hard on himself as a result. | Tendency to undervalue his talent: "it's just natural". Hard on himself. |
| 13. | It's always good to remember those songs [from earlier times]...songs you record are always...a good documentation of where you were at that time. And then you look back on it and see how far you've grown. | Perceives songs written in the past as benchmarks to measure personal growth. | Growth, continuous learning; songs written in past are used as benchmarks to measure growth. |
| 14. | [In response to question about what the experience of playing is like] Not so much playing it but composing it and hearing the final product…, whether it be recorded or after I've just written a song, it's like a definite egotistical thing, like "I'm a genius" or "I'm good" or something like that, where I'm really proud …very, very proud. | Experiences great pride, elation, ego-boosting, and sense of accomplishment when playing music but much more so when finalizing a song he's created. | Feels very proud, elated, accomplished and ego-boosted when he has finalized a song he has composed. Has stronger feelings of pride, elation, and accomplishment from composing than from performing. |
| 15. | Because I took it [idea for a song] from my head. It was just a synapse kind of thing and then there it is. A confidence booster, for sure. Definitely an enlightened confidence booster. | Feels enlightened and confident when he gets an idea for creating and composing music. | Experiences a sense of confidence when composing or writing music. Enlightenment. |
| 16. | [Pause; reflection]. I'm just channeling here [laughs]. It's just kind of like you're walking on the moon basically. Actually, you breathe out a sigh; it's like cheap therapy. You've got this sense that nothing is going to stop you; so you've got this really proud, confident feeling and just really you feel much more clear….. There's nothing. There's no stresses. It's a breath of fresh air to finally get that out of you. | Describes vocation, especially the creative process of song-writing as therapeutic, elating and cathartic; achieves a sense of clarity, the feeling that nothing can stop him. | Experiences his vocation, especially songwriting, as a creative process that is therapeutic, elating, and cathartic: "like walking on the moon"; clarity of purpose; feels invincible, "like nothing is going to stop you". Passion. Drive. |
| 17. | I gauge it upon, you know, what other people have done that are considered powerful. Say like groups like the Beatles or great guitar players and I look at them as powerful people so that when I accomplish something that is equal to them, then I get that same powerful | Compares feeling powerful to how he thinks famous musicians feel when they've achieved something similar; sense of validation: others look up to him; hence, he can look up to himself. | Achievement of creating music promotes feelings of being powerful and validation by others and of self. |

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| | feeling that I assume they would have.<br>Or that people would look up to them as… So I can look up to myself. | | |
| 18. | I think they're [parents] more behind it [his music]than I am... It's one of the reasons I try to succeed at it. | Because he believes his parents are more supportive of his music than he is, he tries hard to succeed. | Parental support motivates him to succeed. |
| 19. | I think with anybody who's creative, you've got that fine line of constantly of being doubtful, so...even though you think you've succeeded at what you've done, there's always that nagging doubt. | Belief that creative people always have a nagging doubt regardless of their level of success. Expresses self-doubt. | Expression of self-doubt; believes all creative people, regardless of success level, experience similar feelings. |
| 20. | So that's where they're [parents] more supportive of it; it seems though at times, when I want to get away from it [music]for a bit, they're pushing it more and that kind of thing and I just go around and uuuuuuggghhhhh. It's always...a little bit of space to get away from it. | Expression of need to sometimes distance himself from his music; Parental support sometimes causes frustration at these times. | Parental support is sometimes frustrating, especially during times when he feels the need to distance himself a bit from his music. |
| 21. | They want to see me succeed at it as much as I do. Sometimes I just don't want to succeed at it. It's self...what's the word for it...destructive. Like the Death of A Salesman who, whenever he gets a chance at succeeding, he screws it up because he's afraid of succeeding. | Parents are supportive and want him to succeed as much as he does but he sometimes experiences a destructive fear of success. | Parents are supportive and want him to succeed as much as he does. He sometimes doesn't want to succeed and recognizes this as a destructive fear of success. |
| 22. | Yeah. 'cause you know all the horror stories [of successful musicians] so it's ..like being in the mafia and delving too far into yourself and sometimes that can be a little dangerous. | Reflects on some of the "horror stories" of others' success; recognizes the danger of too much introspection. | Success "horror stories" provoke fear of success; senses the danger of "delving too far into yourself." |
| 23. | …I don't know anything outside of music. Sometimes I can't even speak. It's really horrible sometimes [laugh]...I don't know anything about sports or anything, just music. I can't communicate sometimes because of it. | Recognizes that he is so involved in music that he doesn't know much about anything else; feels limited in his ability to communicate through speech. | Music is so pervasive in his life that he feels he knows little else; this limits his ability to communicate through speech. |
| 24. | [In response to how he communicates through his music] I just make up stories. It's not [so] much the music; it's not autobiographical because people read | Communicates through music by grabbing ideas out of the air; believes these stories come to his mind rather than from it; makes | Communicates through his music via a creative process that involves "grabbing ideas" that |

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| | a little too much into it and I keep all that stuff to myself…I grab them [ideas] out of the air. Basically that's how it works. There's stories floating around in the air and you just pick up this one bit of energy and just elaborate on that. So it's not really so much coming out of my head. It comes to my head but it's not coming out of my head. | up stories [lyrics] based on these "bits of energy" floating in the air. | come to his mind from "bits of energy" floating around and then elaborating on them to write lyrics. |
| 25. | [How parents are supportive] Financially. Investing money in my groups and stuff like that. Not much by any stretch so that makes it all the more meaningful because they can't really afford it; but they do it nonetheless… That's one of the reasons that I really want to succeed...it would be letting myself down but you'd also hate to see things going to waste. But yeah...there'd be financial support or they'd buy me instruments for my birthday or something like that. | Because parents provide financial support by investing in his bands and buying him instruments, he is more motivated to succeed; doesn't want to let them down or waste the support. | Parental financial support provides motivation for him to succeed and not waste their money. |
| 26. | I've never taken [music] lessons…My dad taught me some Beatles and Led Zeppelin songs when I was a kid and I just took it from there and listened to records and copied…[I play] guitar, bass, drums, piano, any keyboard instrument, sing, harmonica, clarinet, umm. I can basically pick up an instrument and within a little while, like a month or so, I can play. | Father provided support by teaching him some songs. Has never taken lessons. Rather, he is able to pick up virtually any instrument and play it within a short time. | Paternal support in the form of teaching him some songs. No formal training. Is a "natural" who can quickly learn any musical instrument. |
| 27. | Now there again, they [teachers] were supportive, especially with music teachers in school...but there was always support there. Even just giving artistic freedom even within something that is so stringent and rigid types of music. I was given some liberation for being able to play what I wanted to [laugh]. | School teachers, especially music teachers, were supportive by providing him some artistic freedom and liberation from having to play rigid music. | Received support from school teachers, especially music teachers who allowed him artistic freedom. |
| 28. | No, can't read 'em [notes]… I'd just pick it up. | Unable to read notes. He learned music naturally. | Can't read notes. Learning music comes naturally. |
| 29. | [Friends' reactions]…they were supportive of it. They like to be involved…yeah, very supportive. | Friends were very supportive; friends liked to be involved. | Experiences friends' strong support and their involvement. |

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| 30. | [Reactions of band bookers] Kind of neutral but they tend to stigmatize it. They put up the bands and musicians in crummy rooms and treat him like crap and "change in here beside the dough-maker" or whatever…so they don't really look on musicians as being anything... | Experiences mostly neutral reactions from band bookers but some bad treatment from those who view musicians as "not counting for much. | Mostly neutral reactions from music industry but feels stigmatized, poorly regarded and badly treated by some band bookers because he is in a musician. |
| 31. | [Societal support] In Canada, for sure. Yeah. The Alberta Foundation for the Arts is very supportive. They don't really give out enough money to really do anything with but factor grants--we've gotten like tens of thousand of dollars from factor [grants] and that's pretty, "whoa, you've just given me twenty-one grand, o.k." | Finds the Canadian government very supportive, financially, of the arts. | Canadian government is supportive financially. |
| 32. | But just as much as there are all kinds of supportive people there are not supportive people…Well, police, government with taxing and that kind of thing. They've got to realize that you're not making anything but you've got to show all this stuff...like you made a hundred dollars here... and cops being stigmatizing of musicians being drug users, alcohol, whatever. | Experiences negative stereotyping by police and government (tax department), who view musicians as substance abusers. | Feels stigmatized by police and tax department's stereotypical view of musicians as substance abusers. |
| 33. | Especially recently with the decline in live entertainment and more of the dance club kind of thing. There's places I go where people have never even seen a live band before… Shocking, yeah. And they don't know how to react to it. You go to Rocky Mountain House and you finish a song and they don't clap...they're like "Huh?"… So you don't let it get to you. You just go "oh, let's just get out of here". Fucked up Alberta; it sucks. It used to really bring me down. It still kind of does but I've been able to push it aside and just realize they're just idiots. | Reactions of general public to live bands are disturbing and provoke frustration. This discourages him but less so now than before. | Frustration with general public's poor reaction to live bands. Discouragement but less than before. |
| 34. | Police. Uh. Some of them are decent and go, you know, "go ahead" but at borders there are sometimes problems. But for the majority, it's like prejudging us. | Experiences prejudice by majority of police, especially at borders. | Experiences prejudice from police, especially at borders. |

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| 35. | [Effects of others' encouragement] It was good because then I didn't have to…go to university. I was sick of schooling and I didn't want to do that and so ....nice [effect]. Most kids did get pressure from their parents to do something like that [university]. But there was no pressure there [from parents]…I always had in the back of my mind "I can go to university when I'm forty and it doesn't matter as long as I'm learning something". | Experienced good effects of parents' encouragement and, unlike other kids, was not pressured to attend university; feels he can postpone university. | Positive effects of parental support and encouragement: he was not pressured to attend university, unlike other kids. O.K. to postpone university. |
| 36. | But either way, there's always sort of a pressure on myself to succeed or somebody pushing me to...it doesn't really matter who it comes from but it is there. | Experiences pressure to succeed. Its source, whether imposed by self or by others, is irrelevant. | Feels some pressure to succeed, despite the source. |
| 37. | [Effects of friends' reactions] Yeah. Yeah. Very much [positive]. I appreciate the support but I don't even call my friends anymore to come see me play…So, it was kind of cool because it looks good on you with all these people here. More from a business standpoint. But overall, encouragement is encouragement so it has a good effect on you . | Appreciative of friends who show their support by attending his shows [higher attendance makes him look good]; Encouragement is a positive. | Appreciation for friends' support [they attend shows] and encouragement. This is a plus. |
| 38. | It [negative, stereotypical responses of certain parts of society, that is, police, club owners, etc]. It motivated me to totally live past the stereotype. We'd clean up better than the maids would clean up...sort of to set an example for everyone else. We'd clean up our mess; we'd tip the waitresses. Just anything to live down the stereotypes so they'd stop doing that in general. Try to make a change. | Negative stereotypes motivate him to try to elicit a change, to overcome them by doing what is not expected of them, that is, cleaning, tipping, etc. | Attempts to overcome negative stereotyping and elicit change by doing what is unexpected of the stereotype. |
| 39. | [Effect of government grant support] Little nervous because you have to pay it all back but...it's good to see that you can actually dream a bit further with the financial support and that you can actually do more than what you had set out to do...You have a little more cash to make it even more grand than your vision. | Experiences nervousness and a grander vision when receiving government grant support. | Receiving government grants elicits both nervousness and a grander vision. |

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| 40. | We do all of our own posters and album art work...That and the design of what the stage is going to look like and...we do display merchandising and all that kind of thing too.<br>Yeah, [we] draw them [posters, advertisements] or computer alter or computer animate. So I look at more of the artist as not being like a visual thing as more of a crafted songwriting that could conclude that the artist or songwriter is an artist or a musician is an art form so it's kind of sticking that word in there to...broaden that...to not make an artist and a musician two separate things. [I would call myself] just an artist, straight-forward.<br>[That encompasses] music, songwriting, your playing ability, your way with words, basically just a general term for all things... When you look at everything that you've got to do...to survive. Oh--and actor too…You hit the stage and you have to be a completely different person than you are...so you've got to...depressed or not, you've got to be "up"...so I think everything is covered within that term [artist]. | Describes all the activities involved in what he does, everything from artwork and merchandising to playing, writing, and acting, and more. Finds "musician" too limiting a term and prefers to call himself an artist. | Defines his calling in very broad terms: not just musician, but artist, a term that encompasses everything from merchandising, poster design, album art work, technician, performer, musician, songwriter, and actor. |
| 41. | Every job I've had is basically...it gives me...Being a musician, you have to learn so much about the business, so every facet of the music industry that you've got to be involved in...like, I produce records and engineer bands with my studio…And I used to work in a record store and I worked in several different sales shops just to understand what all has to go on to make this work, all the facets. | Every job he has had, from producing records to working in record stores, has given him additional and necessary perspectives on the music industry and has helped him understand "every facet". Has chosen these jobs to self-educate. | Has educated himself through his deliberate choice of jobs, all of which contribute to his continuous learning of "all the facets" of the music industry. |
| 42. | Yeah, [being an equipment technician is part of being an artist] I'd say so 'cause you're manipulating to create the desired effect. So it's...whether it be my guitar sound, I'm tweaking knobs to get the desired effect, the right emotion to convey. | Being an equipment technician is part of his term "artist" because it involves conveying the right emotion. | Expands even further his definition of artist by including that of equipment technician, a function necessary to achieve the "right emotion to convey." |
| 43. | Yeah, [everything I do has to do with music], like, I teach at [a drug and alcohol rehabilitation program], I teach a music therapy class. | Recognizes that everything he does relates to his calling of music. He teaches addicts a music therapy | His calling pervades his life; everything he does has to do with music, including |

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| | | class. | teaching music therapy classes to addicts. Congruency. |
| 44. | That's about all I do in my spare time [watch The Simpsons on TV while playing the guitar]. Any books I read, it's either autobiographical or biographies or something to do with music. ...I watch a lot of movies on music...just to learn more about where a lot of people went wrong and where they went right…and to use that to my benefit…But I've read very few books that don't pertain to music. | In spare time, he simultaneously watches the Simpsons on TV while playing guitar. Any books or movies he reads or watches pertain to music—wants to learn about how others succeeded or not. Uses this knowledge to his own benefit. | Congruence among all aspects of his life; chooses recreational activities [books, movies, TV] that revolve around music. Purposeful and focused use of spare time serves an educational function that satisfies his eager need to continuously learn more about other musicians and apply what they've experienced to his benefit. |
| 45. | But I can't read very well…It [writing songs] can be [more complex than writing books] because you've got to say what takes a book, you've got to put it into...say...twenty lines. You have to make everything so concise. But uh, it can be simpler too. It depends how elaborate. If you want it to really flow or whatever, then you have to really think to word yourself properly. I've got to sit and write two pages in one line. Pheuuh. It's tough. | Despite the claim that he can't read very well, he describes writing songs as being paradoxically both more difficult and yet simpler than writing a book. Recognizes the process as a tough one that demands conciseness and simplicity. | Paradoxically, although unable to read very well, he is able to write songs, a process he considers both more difficult and simpler than writing a book because it demands such precision and conciseness. |
| 46. | No. No. I can't really speak anyways. | Expresses limitations in speaking. | Feels he "can't really speak." |
| 47. | [In response to what impacts his vocation has had on his life]. Like emotionally, it has a huge impact on me, either adverse or for benefit. So it's been good and it's been heartbreaking. With the way people react sometimes...if it's not a good reaction to what you've done...you've spilled your blood, sweat, and tears and all that and they really...you can't help but take it personally so it's [groan]. Like if you go to audition for a record company and they go "Nah, it's not what we're looking for" and you look at it and it feels like I've done something bad. You know, it puts you down. And then there are | Acknowledges that calling has a huge emotional impact on him, both positive and negative. Negative emotions include heartbreak, personal torment, rejection, and pain. Others' negative reactions result in his feeling "put down" whereas positive events, such as a publishing deal, are elating. There's a 50/50 % split between the positive and the negative. | Calling has huge emotional impact on him, eliciting emotions from heartbreak, personal torment, rejection, and pain, to elation. Others' reactions elicit strong emotional reactions, both negative and positive with a 50/50% split. |

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| | other times when something good happens and we've got like a publishing deal…It's about 50/50 but as much as it's a good thing, it's a horrible thing…[the] personal torment of being an artist or a songwriter, musician, the stuff you have to go through...it's not really something you can describe as much as it is something that you have to live. And it can be really painful but, like I've said, it can be really elating. | | |
| 48. | But I think you really feed off the bad as much as you do the good; like so many people would say that you write a better song when you're sad or depressed so I take that all as being a huge impact… | Both positive and negative contribute to his creative process; speculates that better songs may come from sadness; considers all of it as having a huge impact on his life. | Recognition that the impact of calling on his life is "huge"; both positive and negative reactions ultimately have a positive effect on his song writing. |
| 49. | Normally, I don't express myself. I just do. | Difficulties in expressing himself: normally just "does" what he does without speculating too much about it. | Experiences difficulty in expressing himself; he doesn't normally talk about what he does—he just does. |
| 50. | Yeah. I know that if I wasn't doing it [pursuing his calling]...I probably would be crazy, for sure. | Thinks he would be crazy if not pursuing his calling. | Calling is essential to his mental health—he would be "crazy, for sure" if not doing what he does. Congruence. |
| 51. | ...it [calling] just helps me deal with a lot of problems that I have or the way I feel or the way other people feel about me and the way they look at me or I look at myself. So it's therapeutic and without out it, I don't know how I'd be able to cope with day to day kind of...finances and all the concerns of the world and stuff like that. So, it keeps me alive and so that's pretty huge impact. | His music is therapeutic, helping him deal with problems and feelings. His calling helps him cope with day to day problems and worldly concerns. It keeps him alive and this is a huge impact. | Calling is integral to his life—it keeps him alive; it is core. It is therapeutic insofar as it helps him deal with worldly concerns, problems, and emotions. The impact of calling on his life is huge. |
| 52. | … ever since the nineties took over, there's just been no money for bands… what you deserve as an artist or performer...it's just all of a sudden...you know, you begin cutting your own throat by saying "O.k. Two hundred bucks we'll play for". And you've got twenty-five guys at | Financial impact of calling on his life is largely negative; feels he's "breaking his back" while "cutting his throat" financially. Lacks the security of union-protected artists. Experiences an | Financial impact of calling is difficult and results in personal sacrifices. Lack of financial security is a negative effect of pursuing his vocation—it's either |

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| | twenty-five bucks a guy. You're breaking your backs. So the financial end of things isn't very good. And it's not like in my style of music that we can depend upon a union to do that kind of thing. It's more for jazz or classical artists that a union would benefit because it's a lot more corporate for events and stuff. So they've got more money to do that thing. Whereas we're playing bars and clubs. The odd time we'll play at the Conference Centre opening up for a big band. But definitely, financially, it's really hard to survive unless you totally dump everything but then it's a feast or famine. One month you're living the high life and the next, you're not. | unstable, "feast or famine" financial situation due to his calling. | "feast or famine." |
| 53. | My girlfriend. For two years, she basically supported me. I didn't work or anything except to play and record. I made very little money those two years. So I just don't want to ever come to that again. | Being supported financially for two years by girlfriend is another negative impact of his calling. He doesn't want this to happen again. | Negative financial impact of calling: was supported by girlfriend for two years, a situation to which he never wants to return. |
| 54. | ...even if I said like "I'll give up music for you", I'd still be like moonlighting, cheating on her [girlfriend]kind of idea. | Could never give up his music, even for his girlfriend; would continue to play despite any promises her might make. | Calling is essential to him; would "cheat" on girlfriend by continuing to play despite any promises to quit. |
| 55. | But I just figure I'll be doing it [calling] forever.<br>Even in my retirement. I visualize when I'm in a retirement home I'll have my buddies that I'll play with and we'll do performances with my banjo...Hee Haa! [Laughs]. | Expects to pursue his calling forever, even when in a retirement home, he'll be putting on performances. | His calling is a lifelong theme that has no end. Even when in a retirement home, he will never retire from his music but will continue to perform.<br>Congruence. |
| 56. | Yeah. I've definitely got a vision or a plan of where I'm going to be for every ten years.<br>What I'll be doing. What instruments I'll be playing; what I'll be doing in the whole industry. | Has a plan or vision for every ten years; knows what he wants to be doing musically. | Vision of the future, all of which involves music, is congruent with his calling.<br>Vocation is life theme. |
| 57. | [In response to how his calling has affected his relationship with common-law wife] Horribly. Definitely, there's a sense of jealousy | Calling has affected his love relationship "horribly" insofar as common-law wife is jealous of the attention he | Intimate relationship is "horribly" affected by his calling because it invokes jealousy in |

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| | that she has to overcome…There's definitely no thoughts of my own for doing it [cheating with other women]. But there I am, I'm the centre of attention at a venue or something like that and obviously there's women who are looking at you... | receives from other women who see him on stage. | common-law wife. |
| 58. | But definitely when I spend more time with music than with her [common-law wife], there's that "what's more important here?" kind of thing. [Laughs]. Yeah [there is some conflict there] so I make far more time [for her] than I used to…it [the relationship] definitely took away from the music, yeah…It took away from my creativity. It means, like...if I wrote a story about a girl...and everybody does, somebody I don't know...I have no idea who it is...like I said, I just grab songs out of the air, she [girlfriend] is like "who's this person?". Just sounds like a good name; it's just a good story". So then I stopped writing [love songs] because I didn't want to create that friction. So it definitely [affects me]. | Relationship with common-law wife has had negative effects on his calling—he spends more time with her and that takes away from his music. She feels jealous of the time he spends with music and is suspicious of any love songs he may write. To avoid conflict, he has stopped writing love songs. | Relationship with common-law wife limits his creative freedom because he avoids writing love songs so as to avoid conflict with her. Time spent with her takes away from time spent on music. |
| 59. | But it [the relationship] has also pushed me to write more than the typical "boy meets girl" kind of song. So...I look at different kinds of artists like say Elvis Costello who can write songs about things that you have never [emphasis] thought about before...he just...he'll write a song about this and he'll write it so eloquently. so it's sort of moved me to look at other things besides relationships as the motives for songs…so, it's [the relationship]...dulled it [music], but as soon as you see past that, it's actually elevated it. | Relationship with common-law wife has positive effects on his calling, pushing him beyond the typical love songs to consider the works of artists who go beyond the usual motives for songs. Going beyond the initial negatives results in positives, i.e., "elevates it." | Recognition that relationship with common-law wife has positive effect insofar as it pushed him to go beyond typical love songs and consider other artists. Concludes that the relationship initially dulls his music but ultimately elevates it. |
| 60. | Oh yeah. Oh, for sure [I've made sacrifices for my music]. Good job opportunities that give me money. But to me, money's not...very important to me as much as it is to everyone else. There's a little bit of trying to fit in, like I should be thinking about this kind of thing | Has made sacrifices for his music: has foregone well-paying jobs to pursue music. Money is not important to him. Feels some pressure to "fit in" by paying more attention to financial matters but doesn't want to. | Sacrifices more lucrative jobs for his music; monetary gain is not a priority for him; doesn't want to think about financial matters but feels some pressure to do |

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| | [financial concerns] although I really don't want to. | | so. |
| 61. | Nothing [could stop me from music]. It's not a hobby. | Realization that nothing can keep him from his music. It's not a hobby. | Congruence. Music is core to him. Nothing can stop him. "It's not a hobby". Strong sense of purpose. |
| 62. | At the stage I'm at right now, I've got that opportunity to be working full-time at --------Music Store, I'd be making enough money that I could afford a house with…and so forth, but…I still wouldn't have much time to do what I really want to do [music]…but...there's always time for it [more lucrative work]later. | He could be earning more money but chooses not to do so because it would take away from what he really wants: music. Believes there is time later on for more lucrative work. | Deliberately chooses to pursue what he wants to do, i.e., music, despite opportunities to earn more money. |
| 63. | [Regarding his vision for the future] Ten years from now, I'll be producing records in the studios for other bands and being, sort of at the helm of trying to bring the best out of those people by means of producing. By producing and recording them and basically becoming another member of the band for the time that we're recording, making that music. Performing live is something I'll definitely do in my thirties, or who knows, into my forties...who knows. But it's a young man's game. You have to look at that. I want to do music and be involved; there is no age demographic that says you have to be twenty-six to be a producer and you could be eighty and still doing it. | Vision for next ten years includes producing records for other bands, "bringing out their best" and performing live. Knows that performing is a "young man's game" and therefore will not perform forever but feels producing has no age limits. | Strong sense of direction for the future, one that is congruent with his calling. Has a vision for next decade: primarily producing records of other bands, helping them by "bringing out their best". Knows performing may have some age limitations but he can produce music forever. Vocation is a lifelong theme. |
| 64. | I manifest whatever...if I want to be a huge success, then I've got that confidence to say I'm going to be and will be, or at least die trying [laughs]. | Believes he will manifest whatever he sets out to do. Confidence. Determination to achieve goals or "die trying". | Confidence that he will manifest what he wants.<br>Determination and drive to succeed or "die trying." |
| 65. | [Vision of what he'll be doing twenty years hence] You know, either being a songwriter that licenses songs to other artists that don't write their own songs or a producer. That's where I get the most joy out of the music. I don't really get as much joy out of…performing the music as I get out of creating it. | Long-term vision [twenty years from now] includes producing others' music and creating music. Gets most joy from creation of music versus performance. | Long-term vision is consistent with calling; plans to produce and write music. Knows his preference is creation versus performance of music. Joy. Congruence. |

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| 66. | Just getting it [music, song] out into the air or getting it onto tape…it feels fantastic.<br>Yeah, 'cause you go "This is good for somebody else. They're [other bands] succeeding at it and I could be getting this out to the entire world. Who knows? It might make a difference in somebody's life. Like there's people we've met… where people met at our gigs and we're playing and that's part of their memory. That we were playing there. Or that I was singing at the time that they met and they remember that. | Experiences a "fantastic" feeling when getting song out or onto tape. Helps others by getting music out to world and helping bands by producing Speculates that he might be making a difference to someone else, even by simply being part of someone's memories. | Getting music out of him and into the air or onto tape is a "fantastic" feeling. Helps others through his own music: "it might make a difference in somebody's life", and by producing other bands' work. Feels a part of other's memories. Connectedness. |
| 67. | There's an awful lot of satisfaction [in performing] but this song-writing, it'll be there forever, it's not just a moment that's just passed. So there's some immortality to it. | Attains a lot of satisfaction in performing but prefers song-writing because there is immortality in a song that will "be there forever". | Sense of satisfaction from performing but prefers song-writing because of lasting effects. "There's some immortality to it." |
| 68. | I think a lot of people feel really alone and then as soon as somebody feels the way you feel you don't feel alone anymore so as soon as that's animated [through music], they go "I'm not alone here anymore". So I feel good. "This person feels this way. Wait a minute--I'm not crazy". It's sort of like when you're reading a book and you go "Geez, this is a lot like me. This is common." | Feels good when able to connect with others through his music and help them feel less alone and validate their feelings. | Feels good when he can help others through his music. Purposeful use of music as a communication tool that helps him connect with and improve the lives of others by validating their feelings and easing their loneliness. |
| 69. | Definitely. Yeah. To be a part of somebody else…Like to have a legacy to a degree. You know, that you've, at times like, you know, I'm just some dude from Edmonton, and by no means have as good of a story as somebody else. So it I can listen to somebody else talking and there's an idea there, you live their life too. It gives a way for people who cannot speak to speak. Speaking for those who cannot speak [laughs]...<br>Yeah, and for people who have nobody to listen to them. | Music allows him to be connected with others, "to have a legacy". He taps into other people's stories to get ideas for songs; lives vicariously through their stories. He gives voice to those who cannot speak and helps those who have no-one to listen. | Music provides a means of leaving a legacy through music. Connects with others by capturing their stories into songs for the purpose of "speaking for those who cannot speak" helping those who have no-one to listen. |

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| 70. | [How it feels to be Rochester the artist] It feels good. I'm learning more and more about how to relate. Before, music was a form of poetic and it was really only understood by me. And now, I'm realizing that I need to write something that is for people, something that everyone can understand. A universal idea, you know, where everyone can go "oh, I can relate to that rather than just being how I [emphasis] feel. And even if it was about how I feel, have it be the most simplest of emotions; nothing so complex that you read the lyrics and it's like "I have no idea what this is all about". | Feels good to be an artist. Is learning and growing. Has moved away from music understood only by himself and now strives to achieve a universal message understood by all. Movement from complexity to simplicity. | Growth and continuous learning. Acknowledges his movement away from complex lyrics only understood by himself toward universal lyrics that address the "simplest of emotions." |
| 71. | So right now, I see a better future, by simplifying [lyrics]. As a result, I definitely put less stress on trying to be something I either shouldn't be, with like trying to be Leonard Cohen…[being] like this brilliant poet rather than just being somebody who's relatable. It's good to be likeable. | Sees simplification of lyrics as leading to growth and a better future. By being himself rather than someone else [like Leonard Cohen], he can relate to and be liked by others. Is becoming more himself. | Envisions a better future by simplifying lyrics and becoming more who he really is [relatable, likeable], rather than striving to be someone he isn't. Congruence. Increasing sense of "fit." Growth—becoming more himself. |
| 72. | There's no real destination to music or any art form... It's always just a path...you reach a destination but there's something over there as well that you've got to get to. | Views any art form, including music, as a path with no ultimate destination. Continuous striving for the "something over there" | Continuous striving for "something over there"; no real destination in any art form, just a path or journey of discovery. |
| 73. | [His relationship with and feelings for his music] Passion. [pause]. Love. Jealousy, not necessarily of my music but of other people's music. | Experiences love and passion for music, and jealousy of others' music. | Loves music; is passionate about it and jealous of others' music. |
| 74. | [In response to how his calling has changed over the years] Well, just realizing that it is a calling, that hasn't happened until more recently [four years ago]. I can't stop doing this. Accepting that [this is his calling] and realizing that that's what I want to do is a huge step in that. Before I didn't really look at it that way and now I really look at it that way. | His experience of calling has changed over the years when he recently realized that it was indeed a calling, that he "can't stop doing this". This realization is a huge step, from not thinking of it as a calling to definitely thinking of it in that way. | The realization that being an artist is his calling is a "huge step", a major change in how he experiences his calling. Now he really views it as a calling whereas before he did not. Congruence. |

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| 75. | Anybody can be a good musician but to be a purveyor of emotion and thought [through writing songs] and to actually succeed at it and to look out into the audience and see people singing along with your song, and…you realize that this is something I could do forever. And when you realize that you could do it forever, you can't not do it forever so it's just...so that's a huge realizing at that point then. | Feels anyone can be a good musician but not everyone can be a good song writer. Connects with audience through his songs. Realizes that he can't stop pursuing his calling. | Further defines his calling: not just a good musician but, is a song writer whose purpose is to be a "purveyor of emotion and thought." "Huge" realization that he "can't not do it [music] forever." Feels connected with audience through the songs he writes. |
| 76. | …it [calling] being just so natural...Yeah. It's who I am. | Experiences calling as being natural—who he is. | Congruence; calling is who he is. Is a natural. |
| 77. | ...I believe that sound waves can heal diseases. You can find a frequency that can make you see colours or make you feel a certain way or kill a cell. So,...it's spiritual in the sense that, it's not so much what you hear as what you're feeling off the vibrations that the music is giving off. Like there's a note on my guitar that...at times, it's hard...it would wind me. Yeah. And or make me feel like my heart had stopped or skipped a beat or something. | Believes sound waves heal diseases; musical vibrations provoke certain feelings that are spiritual in nature. Certain notes wind him or make his heart skip a beat. | Healing power of music has spiritual connotations; it provokes feelings in listeners. He has physical response to certain notes—is winded or heart skips. |
| 78. | So it's kind of spiritual in that sense that it can cure or heal. So not like religion and dogma but... | Music is spiritual in its healing powers. Distinguishes spirituality as separate from religion and dogma. | Music is spiritual insofar as it has healing power. Differentiates spirituality from religion. |
| 79. | [What being an artist gives him] Oh, it gives me answers but I'm always asking the same questions and looking for different answers for it you know. You know...happiness; it sends me through all of my emotions; gives me a…definitely an emotional workout and makes me feel alive. | Being an artist gives him answers to his questions, happiness, emotional workouts, and sense of feeling alive. | His calling provides answers to his questions, makes him happy, gives him "emotional workouts", and makes him feel alive. |
| 80. | [what his calling has given him]. It's just too big. It's bigger than that [sense of purpose] for me. It's like who I am and I don't really see any other way than what it is. Like, there is no other aspect for me to compare it to. So there's nothing where I can go "It's given me this or it hasn't | Calling is too big and therefore difficult to define in terms of what it's given him. Has nothing with which to compare—it's integral to who he is. It's given him everything. | Expresses difficulty in capturing the scope of what calling has given him because he has nothing to compare it to. "It's just too big"—it's who he is. It's |

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| | given me that". It's given me everything. Well, that's a whole other psychiatric thing [laughs]. Happiness, sadness. | | "given him everything." Congruence. Calling is core to who he is. |
| 81. | Umm. If it [calling] wasn't there, I'd be somebody else [chuckle]. | If he didn't have his calling, he wouldn't be who he is. | Congruence. What he does is core to who he is. |
| 82. | Then that [artist] would be my purpose in life, for sure. Yeah. There's nothing else in my life that would make me think I was something other than what that [music] is...to sway me from that purpose. Yeah. | His calling as artist provides him with his purpose in life; feels nothing could sway him from that purpose. | Sense of purpose derived from calling as artist. Firm in his conviction that nothing could keep him from his purpose. Congruence. |
| 83. | I think everyone's got a calling but they've never tackled it or they don't realize it. Like I said, before four years ago, I didn't realize that it was a calling. [Feels he has a gift] as much as anybody else does. I've got a gift at what I do but your gift is equal. Like even idiot savants… | Believes everyone has a calling but they either haven't pursued it or don't realize it. Feels he has a gift but that all gifts are equal. | Beliefs about vocation: everyone has one but has not necessarily discovered it; Feels he has a gift but it's equal to anyone else's gift. |
| 84. | I'm not sure it's so much a product of my surroundings either so like I couldn't really say...even if my father wasn't a musician, I would still be who I am. | Speculates that he is not a product of his environment. Who he is is who he is, regardless of father's occupation. | Belief that he would be who he is, no matter what his environment or parentage. Congruence. |

Table 6

Second Order Thematic Abstraction of Rochester's Experience of Calling

| Thematic Clusters | Generalized Descriptions |
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| 1. Awareness of own gifts<br>(1, 5, 12, 24, 26, 28, 76, 83) | Playing music came naturally; never took music lessons and can't read notes but can simply "pick up" virtually any instrument and learn to play it within a month; feels he has a gift. |
| 2. Early awareness of vocation<br>(2, 3, 4, 8, 11) | Rochester has very early memories of music's significance; as a young child, he would fall asleep amidst his father's drum set during rehearsals; his early vocabulary consisted on "Mom", "Dad", and the names of their entire record collection; he started forming his own bands in grade two; remembers always wanting to be a rock star; in grade four, he started writing and performing his own songs. |
| 3. Strong parental support<br>(1, 11, 18, 21, 25, 26, 35) | Rochester's parents provided (and continue to provide) ongoing support and encouragement; when he was younger, parents would buy him musical instruments and later provided financial support by investing money in his bands; his father would teach him how to play some songs and would participate in Rochester's bands when he was young; parents want him to succeed and this motivates him. Unlike his peer group, Rochester was not pressured by his parents to go to university; parents support his choices. |
| 4. Recognition and reinforcement from others<br>(27, 29. 31, 37) | Rochester experienced support from teachers, especially music teachers who gave him some artistic freedom to play what he wanted; his friends were supportive and liked to be involved in his productions; friends would attend performances; Canadian government is supportive financially through the provision of factor grants. |
| 5. Perceptions, beliefs, and definitions of vocation<br>(74, 83) | Rochester believes that everyone has a calling but not everyone realizes it; he thinks everyone, "even idiot savants", have gifts equal to his. His own realization that music is his calling, that "I can't stop doing this" is a huge step for him. |

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| 6. Congruence<br>(8, 23, 24, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 61, 71, 75, 76, 81, 82, 84) | Rochester experiences a very high degree of congruence and "fit" between who he is and what he does: "it being so natural…it's who I am" and "if it [calling] wasn't there, I'd be somebody else." Rochester has always wanted to be a musician. Music is so pervasive in his life that he feels he knows little else; everything he reads, movies he watches, jobs he takes, and recreation he chooses, revolve around music; music is core to who he is and is the method by which he communicates: he feels he "can't really speak" yet writes poetry and lyrics. Rochester's calling is essential to his mental health and music is a form of therapy that helps him deal with day to day problems and relate to others; without it, he "would be crazy", its impact is huge: "it keeps me alive"; he could not give up music and would "cheat" even if he promised girlfriend that he'd give it up. For Rochester, calling is a lifelong theme: "I'll be doing it forever"; it is not something from which he would never retire: "it's not a hobby"; all his plans and visions for the future revolve around music, its creation, performance, and production; his calling is his purpose in life; he believes that even if his father hadn't been a musician, he would still be what he is. |
| 7. Vocation, not occupation or job<br>(14, 24, 40, 42, 45, 51, 75, 84) | Rochester defines his calling in very broad terms: not "musician" but rather "artist", a term encompassing "all facets" of the music industry, from merchandising, poster design, album art work, technician, performer, musician, songwriter, and actor, all of which are necessary if he is to be a "purveyor of emotion and thought"; he identifies more strongly with and experiences more joy from the creative song-writing process than from performing; his calling is who he is—it's how he defines himself; believes he would be who he is [artist] regardless of environment or parentage. |

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| 8. Reactions of others and their effects on him<br>(18, 20, 21, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 47, 48, 52, 58, 59, 68) | Rochester experiences his parents' support as primarily motivating but as sometimes frustrating, especially when he needs " a little bit of space", whereas his parents are continually supportive, he sometimes "doesn't want to succeed" and views this as a self-destructive fear of success; teachers' supportive reactions affect him positively insofar as he is given some "liberation" from "stringent and rigid types of music"; his friends are supportive and encouraging and this has a good effect on him; the government of Canada is financially supportive—their grants allow him to "make it even more grand than your vision." Rochester experiences negative stereotyping [band members as drug and alcohol users] and bad treatment by band bookers, hassles at the border, and prejudice from police; although this affects him negatively and angers him, it ultimately has a positive effect because it motivates him to "totally live past the stereotype" by doing the opposite of what is expected of musicians. Rochester is discouraged and frustrated by audiences who, since the decline in live entertainment and the movement to dance clubs, don't know how to react to a live band: "they don't even clap"; others' [record companies, audiences, publishers] reactions affect him deeply and personally. If rejected, he feels pain, heartbreak, personal torment, and frustration; if accepted, he is elated. Ultimately, Rochester recognizes the value of pain and sadness insofar as "you write a better song when you're depressed." Economic trends affect5 him negatively: he experiences "feast or famine." His common-law wife's reaction of jealousy stifles his creativity and takes time away from his music but ultimately it has an "elevating" effect because it pushes him to go beyond the typical "boy meets girl" love song genre; others' identification with his songs has good effects on him; helping others validate their feelings and ease their loneliness makes him feel good. |

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| 9. Purpose, drive, and vision<br>(8, 11, 16, 44, 55, 56, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 72, 74, 75, 80, 82) | Rochester's calling provides him with a strong sense of purpose and a cohesive vision of his future; he remembers always wanting to be a rock star; when in grade four, he began to write his own songs and this gave him hope for a future in music; creating songs provides him with clarity of purpose, a feeling of being invincible: "like nothing is going to stop you'" his purpose as an artist is to be a "purveyor of emotion and thought", to help others by "speaking for those who cannot speak…and…have nobody to listen to them." Rochester is firm in his conviction that nothing could keep him from his purpose; the realization, four years ago, that he had a calling, strengthened his conviction and was a "huge step". Rochester continually strives for "something over there" and recognizes that his calling is a path, a journey of discover and growth; his vision of the future reflects a pervasive, intrinsic, and lifelong theme3 that provides purpose and direction "it's like who I am and I don't really see any other way than what it is …it's given me everything'" he sees himself still playing music when in a retirement home, and producing music well into his later years; his passion for music fuels his drive to succeed; his is determined to succeed or "die trying"; he accepts that performing is "a young man's game" but intends to help other artists by producing their music, by "bringing out their best." Rochester is willing to forego more lucrative opportunities and chooses to continue with what he loves despite personal sacrifices; his vision includes a sense of immortality, the desire to leave a legacy by creating songs that will "be there forever", by capturing others' stories in song, and producing others' work and "getting it out to the entire world…[making] a difference in somebody's life." |
| 10. Service to others<br>(7, 43, 63, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 75, 77, 78) | As a child, Rochester would play along with records and envision the joy he could bring to others while performing; he connects with and serves others through his music by giving voice to their stories, validating their feelings and easing their loneliness, and by being part of their memories. By producing the work of other artists, he is doing "good for somebody else"; he helps them succeed by "getting [music] out to the whole world…[hoping to] make a difference in somebody's life." Rochester strives to write music that has universal appeal, music that everyone can identify with, that addresses the "simplest of emotions"; he brings music to people, music they sing along with, music that has the potential to last forever. He helps substance-dependent people get better by teaching music therapy classes. He believes that sound waves can heal people, elicit feelings and strong physical sensations, and kill cells. |
| 11. Spirituality<br>(77, 78) | Rochester believes that music is spiritual insofar as it has healing powers. |

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| 12. Vocation as sacrifice<br>(52, 53, 60, 62) | Rochester has made sacrifices in order to pursue his calling; he knows he could be making more money doing something else but persists in his pursuit of music; his common-law wife supported him for two years while he played and recorded music, a situation to which he doesn't want to return. |
| 13. Passion, depth of feeling<br>(6, 7, 14, 15, 17, 47, 48, 54, 55, 63, 67, 73, 74, 79, 80) | Rochester is passionate about his vocation; music is his life theme, a life-sustaining passion and drive that provoke deep feelings, both positive and negative. Positive feelings include elation, deep satisfaction, a sense of accomplishment, joy, pride, enlightenment, confidence, clarity, catharsis, power and invincibility, validation by self and others, purpose, drive, commitment, the potential for immortality, a sense of aliveness, and compulsion: "I can't stop doing this." Negative feelings include self-doubt, heartbreak, personal torment, rejection, pain, anger, frustration, jealousy, and fear of success. Rochester makes the analogy of music as a lover with whom he would "cheat"; his vocation "sends me through all of [the] emotions, gives me…an emotional workout." It is "too big…it's given me everything." |
| 14. Peak experiences<br>(16, 66, 77) | Rochester describes the experience of composing as akin to "walking on the moon…you breather out a sigh…you've got this proud, confident feeling and…you feel much more clear…There's nothing, no stresses; it's a breath of fresh air to finally get that [song] out of you"; he feels invincible, elated, peaceful, fantastic. When describing the healing properties of music, Rochester describes his own response to certain notes that provoke a strong physical sensation, that of being winded or having your heart stop. |
| 15. Health and well-being<br>(16, 50, 51, 77, 79) | Rochester's calling promotes good mental and emotional health and well-being; the creative process is elating, clarifying, cathartic, and "it's like cheap therapy"; pursuing his vocation is essential to his mental health—without it, he'd "be crazy, for sure"' it helps him deal with problems and has a "huge impact" insofar as "it keeps me alive"; the healing power of music lends a spiritual connection; vocation gives him emotional workouts that make him feel alive. |

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| 16. Continuous learning and growth<br>(13, 41, 44, 70, 71, 72) | Rochester fondly recalls songs he has written in the past, songs that serve as benchmarks with which to measure his growth; even his spare time is committed to continuously learning about music; any books he reads and movies or TV he watches, are about music; Rochester has educated himself by deliberately choosing jobs and experiences that allow him to learn "all the facets" of the music industry; he recognizes that he is learning more about how to relate to others through his music by moving away from obscure themes that only he can understand, to simple, universal ideas; he is becoming increasingly more comfortable with who he is and puts less stress on himself to be someone he's not; Rochester recognizes his calling as a continuous striving for "something over there", an ongoing path of discovery. |
| 17. Negative feelings invoked by vocation and effects on him<br>(9, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 30, 32, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 46, 47, 52, 53, 57, 58, 59) | Rochester's early recollections of performing music are associated with nervousness, stomach aches, and dreams; he experiences self-doubt, frustration, a self-destructive fear of success, and the fear of too much introspection. Because music is his primary method of communication, he feels limited in his ability to express himself through ordinary speech: "I can't communicate because of it"; bad treatment and negative stereotyping foster feelings of anger and frustration but ultimately motivate him to try to change the negative image; the reactions of audiences who have never seen a live band initially bring him down but he has been able to overcome that; he feels pressured to succeed, regardless of the source of pressure; government grants make him nervous because he has to pay them back; he experiences rejection, heartbreak, personal torment and pain: "it's a horrible thing"; he feels financially insecure: "you're breaking your back" while "cutting you won throat" by accepting fewer earnings than he feels he deserves as an artist. Rochester's relationship with his common-law wife is "horribly" affected by his calling because it invokes her jealousy, limits his creative freedom, and takes time away from his music. |
| 18. Positive feelings invoked by vocation and effects on him<br>(6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 25, 38, 39, 47, 48, 51, 59, 64, 65, 66, 70) | Rochester experiences many positive feelings as a result of his calling, including joy, elation, satisfaction, accomplishment, inspiration, hope, pride, confidence, enlightenment, catharsis, clarity, invincibility, power, validation, motivation to succeed, grow, and learn, all of which have hugely positive effects that pervade his life. Even the negative emotions fuel positive effects. |

# APPENDIX D
# INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What follows are lists of the questions posed during each of the first two interviews, the structuring interview and the data-gathering interview. During the data-gathering interview, some probing questions were asked in addition to those cited in the following list. The third and final interview, the corroborating interview, did not follow a prescribed set of questions.

## Structuring Interview Questions

1. Have you experienced a calling to a vocation or certain type of work?
2. Are you currently pursuing your calling?
3. How old are you?
4. What is your occupation?
5. What is your level of education?
6. Is your education directly related to the pursuit of your calling?
7. What is your marital status?
8. Do you have children? If so, how many? What are their ages?
9. Would you like me to use a pseudonym for confidentiality purposes? If yes, would you please choose your own pseudonym? What is that name?

## Data-Gathering Interview Questions

1. Could you please describe your earliest experience of being called?
2. Please describe the emotions you were experiencing at that time.
3. Do you remember experiencing any bodily sensations at the time? If so, would you please describe them?
4. What were the reactions of others to your calling (parents, teachers, friends, associates, society in general, whomever)?
5. What effects, if any, did others' reactions have on your experience of calling?
6. Could you please describe any impact that the experience of calling has had on your life?
7. What is your current experience of being called? Please describe your feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations.
8. Has your experience of being called changed over the years? If so, how?
9. Is there anything else you would like to add?

# APPENDIX E
## FORMS AND CORRESPONDENCE

What follows are the forms and correspondence I used for the research process. In addition to the standard forms that I used here, I also corresponded with the participant in person or by phone, in order to keep her informed of the research process.

## Letter of Introduction and Study Description

Date

Dear

I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Educational Policy Studies with a specialty in Adult and Higher Education. I am also a career consultant within the Human Resources consulting practice of KPMG Consulting. Both my studies and my work have led me to an area of research that is particularly interesting to me and, I believe, important to the fields of career development and adult learning. I am exploring the question, "What is the lived experience of being called to a particular vocation or area of work?"

Through my inquiries at work and at university, you have been identified as someone who has experienced a calling. For this reason, I am particularly interested in interviewing you, to hear your experience of being called and what that experience has meant to you.

The purpose of my study is to capture, as much as possible, the lived experience of being called. To serve this purpose, I have made a thorough review of any personal biases or preconceptions that could cloud my understanding or influence my research. Hopefully, this strategy will help me better capture the essence of your experience. The key word here is your. By going directly to the source, i.e., you, and through the use of an open-ended interview, I hope to begin to better understand your experience of being called.

I expect that we will need to meet three times. The first meeting will be brief and I will ask you primarily demographic questions. The second meeting will involve an in-depth interview that will last from one to one and a half hours and will allow you to explore your experience within a very loose framework of open-ended questions. You are encouraged to begin wherever if makes sense for you to begin and take the interview wherever you want it to go. I will provide only a minimal amount of structure through the use of very broad, open-ended questions. Please remember that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers. Because I want to learn about and from your experiences, please respond to questions as openly and as honestly as possible. Respond as you wish, not as you think I expect you to respond. Whatever your response, please be assured that it is the right one.

The third and final meeting will provide you with an opportunity to review my interpretation of the data gathered from your interview and to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

I hope that the research process will provide you an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of your own calling and may result in increased self-awareness and a heightened sense of purpose. In addition, I am confident that the data gathered from your experience of calling and the resulting thesis will contribute to the existing body of literature and will broaden my understanding of this interesting phenomenon.

This introduction provides only a brief overview of the research project. Consequently, you may want additional information before committing to becoming a research participant. To answer any questions you may have, I will telephone you on __________________. As well, please feel free to call me to discuss any other concerns that may emerge as the research process evolves. I can be reached at (780) 458-1307.

Sincerely,

Patricia Albers

Consent to Participate

I, ______________________________________, agree to participate in the thesis research being conducted by Patricia Albers as part of her M.Ed. program. I am aware that the purpose of this research is to explore the question "What is the lived experience of being called to a particular vocation or area of work?". I have read the Letter of Introduction and Study Description that described in detail the study and its intents. I have reviewed the letter with Ms. Albers.

I agree to share my experiences of the research topic with Ms. Albers, and understand that the interview will be the primary source of data. I hereby grant permission for this data to be used in the process of completing a Master of Education thesis.

I am aware that the information I provide is strictly confidential and that, unless I otherwise give written permission, my real identification will remain unknown. My real name, and the names of any others mentioned during the interview, will not be revealed. Ms. Albers has revealed to me three instances wherein she would be obligated to break confidentiality: if she believes me to be a danger to myself, a danger to others, and where child abuse is revealed.

I understand that the interviews will be audiotaped and transcribed verbatim, except for names, and hereby give my permission for this. Pseudonyms (i.e., false names) will be used in the transcript and the thesis. I agree to this on the condition that the researcher be the only person with access to the interview tape and transcript, and that their storage will be secure, unless I otherwise give written permission to the contrary. The transcript may be included in the appendices of the thesis. However, upon completion of the transcript, the audio tape will be erased.

I understand that I am free to ask questions about the research study and expect that they will be promptly and explicitly answered to my satisfaction. I am free to refuse to answer any specific questions and may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without explanation. In the event that I choose to withdraw, any and all information about me and my experience will be immediately destroyed.

I understand that, should the interviews raise issues or concerns for me, Ms Albers will provide appropriate referrals to counselling an/or other service.

Signature________________________________________

Date___________________________________________

Witness_________________________________________